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PERIODICALS DEPARTMENT

EDITORIAL

DEMERIT PAY FOR REAGAN

Of all the harebrained ideas masquerading as social policy in Reagan's Washington, none has infected the national mind and the liberal imagination as swiftly as merit pay for teachers. It is the op-edible topic par excellence, as *Washington Monthly* editors Charles Peters and Phil Keisling demonstrated last week in a *New York Times* slot.

"Merit pay is clearly an idea whose time has come," they began, with an unusually original turn of phrase. "All teachers are not equal. We should pay less to the bad ones to get them to leave. But we should pay more to the good ones to get them to stay."

That's a terrible strategy for education; it exaggerates the inequality, competitiveness, class bias, sexism and racism that have destroyed the schools in the first place. In practice, merit pay substitutes for expensive but essential investment in the community and the schools which could produce committed teachers, eager students and meaningful classwork, while it rewards white middle-class men and a few token blacks and women who think they are Sidney Poitier or Bel Kaufman.

Still, the notion of merit pay might be salvaged if its purpose was altered. Several schemes have been broached in that regard; ours, called "Demerit Pay for Politicians," goes like this:

Major officials would start their terms with a certain salary. Every time they failed to meet performance standards in areas of national concern, dollars would be deducted. Thus, Reagan would get "demerits" for every military adviser he sends overseas; Treasury Secretary Regan would lose pay for every percentage point of unemployment over, say, 3.5; Interior Secretary Watt's sum would drop with every fall of acid rain.

The bugs can easily be worked out. It might not get good politicians to stay. But just see how paying less will get the bad ones to leave.

DEBATEGATE
W. Shakespeare

ON 'MISSOURA'
Calvin Trillin

N.L.R.B. POLITICS
Patrick Owens

SEGUNDO
Edward Rivera

THE JEWISH STATE
Stanley Diamond

HERSH'S KISSINGER
Alan Wolfe

ARGUING WITH OZICK
Barbara Koenig Quart

PARTY-WITHIN-A-PARTY PLAN

PROGRESSIVE POLITICS IN 1984

JOHN ATLAS, PETER DREIER AND JOHN STEPHENS

Last year, Doreen Del Bianco, a former member of the hospital workers' union (District 1199), ran as the Democratic candidate for the Connecticut Legislature from Waterbury and defeated the Republican incumbent. What was notable about her campaign was the strong support she received from the Legislative Electoral Action Program (LEAP), a new left-of-center coalition which includes the United Automobile Workers, the International Association of Machinists (I.A.M.), the Connecticut Federation of Teachers and other unions, women's and environmental groups and the Connecticut Citizen Action Group, a community organization which Del Bianco co-chaired. She ran an issue-oriented campaign calling for lower utility rates, property tax reform and the cleanup of toxic wastes. Thanks to her links with labor and single-issue groups, she was able to mobilize a small army of experienced, energetic campaign workers.

Del Bianco is one of a growing number of politicians whose roots are in the progressive movements of the past decade and who represent an important new force on the left for the 1984 primaries and beyond.

Progressives who want to defeat Reagan and at the same time offer an alternative to Carter-style liberalism have generally considered three options. The first and easiest choice is to join the bandwagon of one of the current Democratic candidates. That course is known as the Anybody But Reagan strategy. Although Alan Cranston styles himself a peace candidate, Gary Hart emphasizes his youth and spouts trendy neoliberal ideas

(*Continued on Page 82*)

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LETTERS.

THE POPE IN POLAND: NO BIG DEAL

New York City

It's hard to know everything about Pope John Paul II's "deal" with the Polish government, says "The Polish Concordat" [editorial, *The Nation*, July 9-16]; the "details" are "hidden . . . by the Vatican's fine Roman hand and twisted by Byzantine reason." But the writer can discern the basic terms; obviously, the Pope bought tolerance for the church "in return for the soul of Solidarity and the head of Lech Walesa."

True, no one has yet established that any deal was made. But who needs evidence? The church, after all, is more than a "moral missionary"; it is also a "political presence," with its own parties, media, schools, organizations. Remember the long dominance of the Christian Democrats in Italy. Remember how "Catholic power has prospered by accommodation—with the Nazis and Fascists in their day." Space permitting, the editorial could well have called up other memories: the Inquisition, the Crusades, the Gunpowder Plot, Joe McCarthy's religion, all those secret tunnels between convents and rectories.

General Jaruzelski should have *The Nation*'s comments translated for publication in *Trybunu Ludu*. Polish workers should understand that when the Pope spoke to them of the need for dialogue between the government and those who "represent the true aspirations of the workers and the need of honest solidarity among them," when he praised the 1980 Gdansk agreements between Solidarity and the government and asked for their reinstatement, when he told workers that their right to form a labor union is "innate and therefore inalienable," he was just being Byzantine. If he really meant those things, he would have proved it by walking on water, or flying around without a helicopter.

Robert G. Hoyt, Editor
Christianity and Crisis

NO 'CAPITAL STRIKE'

Berkeley, Calif.

To attribute the economic difficulties of Western democracies to a "capital strike" makes good rhetoric, but it happens to be misinformed opinion [editorial, "The Bubble Could Burst," *The Nation*, July 2]. In fact, the rate of investment over the last decade has not measurably declined in any capitalist nation. There has been no economic growth because the return on investment has declined. If anything, many of the current economic difficulties of Europe—and to a lesser extent those of the United States—are due to excessive investment, much of it by the public sector, in areas of the economy that offer little prospect of creating additional wealth. Moreover, if the power of capital is at the root of the West's difficulties, then how does *The Nation* account for the economic stagnation of the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and the Communist regimes of the Third World? Could at least part of the reason left-of-center parties are doing so poorly throughout Western Europe (even Iceland, Denmark and Norway now have right-of-center governments) be that their explanation of Western economic difficulties lacks credibility?

David Vogel
Schools of Business Administration
University of California

REPLY

The most recent (June 1983) U.S. Department of Commerce survey estimates that non-farm business capital spending will be 3.1 percent lower this year than in 1982 (adjusted for inflation). The 1982 figure, in turn, was 5.5 percent lower than in 1981; the 1981 figure was only 0.2 percent higher than in 1980. "Stagnation" seems to be the best possible interpretation of those numbers.

Certainly the decline in the return on investment—plunging profits—is a reason for the reticence of business to invest. But the lack of investment itself represents the "decision" to withhold capital from productive use. Reaganomics explicitly recognized the problem and put forward elaborate incentives to promote investment growth. They have so far failed.

The economic difficulties of noncapitalistic countries derive from elements of their economies (as well as from the world economic order, such as it is) and are not directly comparable to our own.

The troubles of "left-of-center parties" in Western Europe are, on the other hand, quite similar to ours. Those parties (and the welfare and social democratic governments they sometimes tend) are unwilling and unable to break their own "capital strikes." The abysmal showing of German capital spending in the last several years—the economic miracle undone—occurred during the Social Democratic Party's tenure.

Delinquent capital spending is not the economic disease, as the Reaganomists would have it; it is the symptom of a malady called waste and want. The disease is unemployment, hunger, despair, alienation, work futility and social dislocation. Full employment is the state of health, and in approaching it the symptoms will begin to disappear. —*The Editors*

KLARE'S FALLACIOUS 'FALLACY'

New York City

The thrust of Michael T. Klare's "The Conventional Weapons Fallacy" [*The Nation*, April 9] seems itself fallacious.

I have no quarrel with Klare's detailed and disturbing descriptions of the proposed "near-nukes" and of the widespread damage and human suffering they could cause. But the point of his article, as suggested in its title, seems to be that the West should not proceed with the development and deployment of such weapons because they may *increase* rather than reduce the risk of nuclear war. Klare's argument is not convincing. He points to ways in which the use of the new weapons could lead to a nuclear conflict, but he fails to recognize how easily a conflict with today's weapons could have the same result.

Under current NATO strategy, the West might have to resort to nuclear weapons if a Soviet conventional attack in Europe were succeeding. If that strategy is to be abandoned in favor of a "no first use" position, as proposed by Bundy, Kennan, McNamara, Smith and others, then NATO's conventional defenses have to be improved to the point where they will be perceived by both sides as capable of repelling a conventional Soviet attack.

In other words, if the development of more sophisticated conventional weapons leads to a lessened reliance on nuclear weapons and acceptance of "no first use," then the near-nukes will indeed *reduce* the likelihood of nuclear war.

Jonathan Bingham, Former Member
House Foreign Affairs Committee

KLARE REPLIES

Washington

Jonathan Bingham, while certainly motivated by a desire to reduce the risk of nuclear catastrophe, clearly misses the point of my argument. I did not say that deployment of near-nuclear conventional weapons in Europe would *increase* the risk of nuclear war; what I did say was that such deployment would not automatically *reduce* the risk of Armageddon, as claimed by Bundy, McNamara and others. I offered several reasons why this was the case, the most important being that the Russians would certainly respond by deploying similar arms, thereby further endangering NATO's defenses and increasing the likelihood that one side or the other would resort to the use of nuclear arms should a war actually erupt. Nothing in Bingham's letter suggests that he can rebut this fundamental point. *Michael T. Klare*

TIPTOP ALOFF

Oakland, Calif.

In engaging Mindy Aloff as its dance critic, *The Nation* has added to its stature. I have read Aloff's criticism in various forums over the past several years and found her writing stimulating, her analysis penetrating and well reasoned, and, perhaps most important, her love of the art apparent. As the dance critic for the *Oakland Tribune*, I am aware that among other dance writers Aloff is recognized as one of the leading practitioners of the craft. It is a pleasure to see her talents recognized by *The Nation*. *Janice Ross*

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EDITORIALS.

No Triumph Of Will

George Will, the syndicated columnist and television commentator, says that the papers purloined from the Carter campaign to help prepare Ronald Reagan for the 1980 debate were "excruciatingly boring," and, further, that his role in the preparation process was "minimal." These are dubious excuses for political theft and journalistic conflict of interest. If only racy and titillating campaign materials were protected from piracy, no briefing book in Washington would be safe from thieves in the night. And if all but maximally important journalists were barred from campaign entourages, candidates' planes, buses and country retreats would be barren and lonely places indeed.

Had Will been leaked the papers for journalistic comment, no voices of protest would have been raised, that constituting business as usual. But the possibility of post-Watergate dirty tricks for a politician's gain is what has Will's colleagues in the mainstream press in a dither. And his customary clarity and moral resolve seems to have been no help in this instance. No absolutes of right and wrong here: "If there's a line, and you see a line," Will told *The Wall Street Journal*, "you don't step over it." Dripping in various shades of gray, he added, "Two years later you wind up with a lot of turmoil on your hands."

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What Will did, or what he was caught doing, was to comment as an objective journalist on matters in which he had a subjective interest, and not reveal that interest. On ABC's *Nightline* (in the most egregious instance), he reviewed Reagan's debate performance minutes after the event. "When he is under pressure, he is a thoroughbred," Will said of candidate Reagan. Now it appears that Will tutored Reagan and critiqued his rehearsals for the debate at Wexford, the lavish Virginia estate where the performance was perfected. Will came across the stolen Carter papers spread out on the kitchen table of his chum David Stockman.

Some newspapers have already mounted their own thoroughbreds and canceled Will's column, and many of his colleagues are weighing in with criticism. "He impersonated a reporter," Mary McGrory wrote in her *Washington Post* column. "What he did was to work out in the gym with the challenger and then, without mentioning the fact to readers or viewers, reviewed the fight on television."

In an editorial stating its reasons for dropping Will's column, New York's *Daily News* called his conduct "a violation of journalistic ethics." His unacknowledged participation in the debate rehearsals was a "smoking gun" which was used as evidence to send him down. But the context of Will's conduct is more significant than the pretext for punishment. Like so many political journalists, he is enmeshed in a nexus of power and privilege which blurs vision and stifles voice. To extend McGrory's ring metaphor (and disregard Will's racecourse preferences), he pulls some punches and directs others according to the demands of the status game in Washington. Power and status corrupt the most self-righteous writers and moralistic journalists as surely as they corrupt eager politicians.

And *everybody* does it (as William Safire said in defense of his former employer Richard Nixon). Reaganauts and Carterites, columnists and anchorpersons and, in their own ways, the inaccessible editors of great daily newspapers. These media stars and their institutions are as much a part of the American political system as Tass, Xinhua and their directors are of systems in less individualistic lands. There's no easy answer (a favorite phrase in the columns) to Will's problem, and ours, but perhaps his pieces and those of his colleagues should carry a warning at the end: "The material above is less the product of an independent mind and a moral will than you used to believe."

BOOM vs. SLUMP

The Administration anchors its political hopes for November 1984 on a strong economic recovery. To that end, government statistics are orchestrated to give the appearance of boom. Most of the press swallows the figures without much of a chew, but two international agencies have much less sanguine views.

The U.N. World Economic Survey calls the U.S. recovery "sputtering and uncertain." It forecasts anemic investment rates continuing worldwide, and says the global growth rate in 1983 will be a paltry 2 percent. The International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook predicts that the "modest" recovery will be killed—here and abroad—by U.S. fiscal and monetary policies. The I.M.F. sees the slump starting in early 1985. The race is on.

As Italy Turns

"Power wears out—those who don't have it," Giulio Andreotti, former Prime Minister of Italy, once answered a journalist who had asked about the apparent inertia and increasing corruption of his Christian Democratic Party. This Machiavellian credo—using power to wear down one's enemies—has been the working strategy of the Christian Democrats for thirty-seven years; but it was turned inside-out by the surprising results of the elections in Italy June 27. The ruling D.C. (Democrazia Cristiana) suffered the worst defeat in its history, dropping nearly six points to 32.9 percent of the vote. Fed up with a seemingly endless string of scandals and weak, ineffective governments, the electorate rebelled. The defeat placed the D.C. only three points above the Communist Party (which got 29.9 percent of the vote)—the party which was supposed to have been worn out by its exclusion from power.

Italian politics in the 1970s centered on the struggle between the Christian Democrats and the Communists, and on the possibility of a right-left alliance between them known as the "historic compromise." With the June elections, that phase seems to be over. It ended in stalemate and paralysis. Italy has been a "blocked democracy," in which alternation of governments was impossible. Now it is moving into a new, fluid period in which the Socialist Party will hold the key to future governments. At first, this will mean alliances between the Christian Democrats and the Socialists. But for the first time a coalition of the left has become a real possibility.

Before that happens, it is likely that the D.C. will dominate yet another five-party coalition. The forty-fourth Italian postwar government will resemble the forty-third—although a Socialist, Bettino Craxi, may sit at its head. It will probably be as weak and divided as its predecessor and as incapable of confronting the problems of 17 percent inflation and 10 percent unemployment. So what has changed?

First, the basic arithmetic of Italian politics has been revised. In the future the numbers could add up to give the country a government of leftist parties, and eliminate the Christian Democrats. It is not likely to happen soon because other alliances are more attractive, but the fact that it's possible widens the political options open to the parties on the left.

Second, this was the first election since World War II in which the outcome was not heavily influenced by fear of the Communists. In the past, the specter of a Communist takeover guaranteed the D.C.'s electoral strength and postponed the day when it would have to account for its mismanagement and abuse of power. That the fear has lessened is due in part to the fact that the Communists were given no

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chance of winning; and in part to the P.C.I.'s (Partito Comunista Italiano) independence from the Soviet Union and its respect for parliamentary democracy.

Third, the two conservative "grand designs" that dominated the campaign and appeared to indicate the emergence of a "new right" were rejected by the voters. The elections were presented by the parties and by the press as a tug-of-war between Christian Democratic leader Ciriaco de Mita and Socialist chief Craxi, the outcome of which would determine whether the next coalition would be center-right or right-center. De Mita's dream was to win an absolute majority so he could rule without having to depend on the Socialists. Craxi hoped that a substantial gain would make him Prime Minister of the next coalition and his party the cornerstone of the political center. Both plans cut the P.C.I. out of the deal.

Craxi did gain slightly—the Socialists went from 9.8 percent of the vote to 11.4 percent—but far less than he needed to become the strongman of a new centrist government.

While the June elections were a rejection of the master plans of de Mita and Craxi, they do not indicate an ideological shift to the left. The Communists, in fact, lost half a percentage point, and the combined vote of all the parties on the left, including the Socialist Party, remained roughly 45 percent. The real beneficiaries of the Christian Democrats' loss were the small parties of the center and the right. Of them, the Republican Party of Giovanni Spadolini was the biggest winner, going from 3 percent to 5.1 percent. Even though the Republicans offered a program of economic austerity similar to de Mita's, they gained because they project an image of seriousness and honesty. In his seventeen-month stint as Prime Minister in 1981 and 1982, Spadolini gave the Italians a taste of change. The success of the Republicans, like that of the Liberal Party (which is actually quite conservative), indicates that voters rejected the D.C. not so much on ideological grounds as on moral ones.

The Christian Democrats lost big in their strongholds in Naples and Sicily—the areas most oppressed by the Mafia and its Neopolitan cousin, the Camorra. There, voters turned to the neo-Fascist M.S.I. (Movimento Sociale Italiano) as a party of law and order. That, too, was a protest vote against the Christian Democrat style of government—in this case against its complicity with organized crime.

Craxi failed to win the votes of those defecting from the D.C., partly because he seemed to be part of "politics as usual" rather than a relief from it. He gained considerable ground from 1980 to 1983 by offering a way out of the stalemate between the Communists and the D.C., promising "governability" and institutional reform at home and a firmly pro-NATO stand in foreign policy. But he disappointed his new followers by appearing overly opportunistic. While talking of governability, his jockeying for political leverage toppled four governments.

Despite Craxi's less than impressive showing at the polls, the D.C. seems ready to cede the prime ministership to him as the price of salvaging the coalition. That is more a maneuver to preserve power than a response to the demand for change. Craxi must be aware that the past partnership of the Socialists and the Christian Democrats was a disaster for his party. The Socialists lost much popularity as they appeared to acquiesce to the Christian Democrats' continued rule. If the next government results in the same constellation of power, Craxi will have to reconsider the Communists' offer of an "alternative of the left"—a broad left coalition.

A left coalition would produce the change in Italy's governing clique which the recent elections seemed to call for. Craxi can ignore that message of the voters at his own peril—or he may be worn down by the Christian Democrats, as so many rivals have been before. ALEXANDER STILLE

Alexander Stille worked for two years for the Italian publisher Mondadori.

Bard Replies

*President Reagan's first response to Debategate was to call the whole thing "much ado about nothing" (he was well-advised to refrain from the phrase "fourth-rate burglary attempt"). He thus implicated a well-known writer of the late Tudor period (*not *under network contract), who does not now have access to the major media. Since the President defended himself at length in a televised press conference, and may frequently comment on the matter as he en- and deplanes from his helicopter, we believe that under the Fairness Doctrine William Shakespeare should be granted the right of reply. (All quotes taken from* Much Ado About Nothing.*)*

Q. Mr. Shakespeare, what was your reaction to the stories about the Republicans allegedly stealing campaign secrets?

A. "O! what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do, not knowing what they do!"

Q. You mean you accept Mr. Reagan's explanation that neither he nor his staff had knowledge of any stolen material?

A. "O! what authority and show of truth/Can cunning sin cover itself withal."

Q. Then you think there was a cover-up?

A. "Flat burglary as ever was committed."

Q. Apparently, the President's denials didn't impress you.

A. "His words are a very fantastical banquet—just so many strange dishes."

Q. You mean the President was lying?

A. "[He] charm[s] ache with air, and agony with words."

Q. Mr. Reagan said he had asked the Justice Department to investigate. Do you think it will make an honest effort to prosecute the guilty parties—even if they are high-level Republican officials?

A. "If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

"Truly, by your office you may; but I think . . . the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company."

Q. Thank you, Will.

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CALVIN TRILLIN

My response to the news of a campaign to promote the proper pronunciation of Missouri is simple: It's about time. We Missourians have suffered enough. Yes, we have suffered. I know what you're saying. You're saying, "Big deal!" Don't deny it. You're saying, "Why is he getting all excited just because somebody pronounced his silly state wrong?" A rhetorical question meant as an insult! No? Then why did you say "*silly* state"? As you Easterners are always saying, was that really an accident? Was it really an accident that you didn't say, "Why is he getting all excited just because somebody pronounced his proud and historically significant state wrong?" Even if Missouri were a silly state—and it is most emphatically not, despite years of being mispronounced and having Missouri mule jokes told about it—that would be no excuse to mispronounce it. If we mispronounced everything we considered silly, this place would be a shambles. Democratic congressmen would rise in the House to criticize Secretary of the Interior James Wutt as the silliest man in the Roogan Administration. We can't have that.

Now you're wondering how Missouri is pronounced. All of a sudden, after all these years, you want to know how Missouri is pronounced. I'm tempted to say, "It's not a matter that need concern you." That would be petty, though, and if there's one thing we Missourians have avoided through all of this it's pettiness—although, believe me, we have been sorely tempted. Missoura. That's how it's pronounced—as if it were spelled Missoura. Until I was about 12, I didn't just pronounce it as if it were spelled Missoura—I spelled it as if it were spelled Missoura. Nobody ever corrected me. The teacher must have thought it was spelled that way, too.

Now you're going to say that Missourians aren't very good spellers. Go ahead. Say it. Then I'll say, "How about Harry S Truman?" He was from Missouri, and he could spell rings around the fellow they have in there now. Harry S Truman could spell so well that he knew not to put a period after his middle initial. Why not? Because it didn't stand for anything, that's why. His name wasn't Harry Sebastian Truman or anything like that. We don't name people names like that in Missouri. The S in Harry S Truman just stood for S—that is considered a fine middle name in Missouri—and you don't put a period after an initial if it stands for itself. That's the sort of punctuational subtlety you learn in Missouri schools. Harry S Truman always said "Missoura." I don't know how he spelled it, but he could spell it any way he wanted to, because he was the President.

I can hear what you're saying, even though you're halfway mumbling it because you're afraid I'll get mad and threaten to punch you in the nose the way Harry S Truman threatened that music critic who insulted his daughter. (The Missouri position on that incident, by the way, is this: The man was a yellow dog and deserved to be dealt with.) You're saying, "Calm down." Speak up! I'm not going to punch you in the nose. Through all of this, we Missourians have avoided violence—although, let's face it, what would *you* do if some Eastern pantywaist who had just made a mad-dog pronunciational attack on *your* proud and historically significant state told *you* to calm down. Punch him in the nose?

I think I could have remained calm all these years if our suffering had consisted simply of hearing uninformed people mispronounce Missouri. There's more to it than that. They not only mispronounce Missouri—they make fun of us for pronouncing it correctly. If a Missourian who happens to be in the East pronounces his own state correctly, you can count on somebody saying, "Oh, I suppose folks out there pronounce it Missoura—heh, heh." It's that "heh, heh" that tempts us to violence.

I know what you're saying. You're saying, "He seems to be just a tad defensive." You'd say, "He seems to be just a tad defensive—heh, heh," except you're afraid if you said that I'd punch you in the nose. Yes, I'm a tad defensive. You'd be defensive too if a lot of Easterners said "heh, heh" at you for correctly pronouncing your own state. That's not all they do. They pronounce a lot of other words in a way that keeps Missourians from knowing what's going on. Take that fad Alex Haley started by tracing his family way back to some place where nobody ever heard of cornbread. People on television kept saying they were interested in tracing their roots—as if it rhymed with lutes or suits—and for the longest time people in Missouri who never heard it pronounced that way thought the fad was about tracing highway routes. The fad was practically over before Missourians figured out that what was being discussed was roots—which in Missouri is pronounced to rhyme with toots, just like it's spelled. Once Missouri people put away their road maps and started tracing their roots, of course, they found them to be proud and historically significant.

What campaign? Is that what you're saying—what campaign to promote the correct pronunciation of Missouri? The campaign that just took out an advertisement in the Lee's Summit, Mo., *Journal* exhorting all true Missourians to fight the conspiracy of TV broadcasters, "tradition-trampling educators and their follow-the-leader ventriloquist dummies" and other assorted dog-buckets who are trying to blot out the proper pronunciation of Missouri through "un-American censorship, persecution, and brainwashing." I don't know who wrote the advertisement, but I admire his style. I'm with him. All the way. All right, I'm a little uneasy about his asking parents to report any teacher who has "made a mockery of the First Amendment and the Golden Rule" by requiring children to use the "parrot squeaky, long-e Missouree" pronunciation, but, as they say in Missouri, you can't make an omelet without Kraft cheese. His scholarship is impressive, although don't look up the ad in the hope of finding out why a state that is properly pronounced Missoura has a parrot squeaky spelling. It's not a matter that need concern you.

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ARTICLES.

ANTI-LABOR RELATIONS

Unionbuster At the N.L.R.B.

PATRICK OWENS

On March 4, in anticipation of his appointment as solicitor of the National Labor Relations Board, Hugh Reilly did the decent thing. He resigned as chief counsel for the plaintiffs in *Beck v. Communications Workers of America*, an antiunion lawsuit financed by the National Right to Work Foundation. But the gesture won Reilly few points with labor. Union leaders were outraged to learn that for the previous fifteen months he had moonlighted as a volunteer unionbuster while holding down a salaried job at the Labor Department. Even the teamsters' union, the Administration's only important labor ally, was critical of the appointment.

Reilly was brought to the N.L.R.B. by its freshman chairman, Donald Dotson, his former boss at the Labor Department and one of three Reagan appointees to the board so far. He had been on the job only a short while when Dotson learned that *Newsday*, the Long Island daily, was about to publish a story about Reilly's conflict of interest. On May 19 the N.L.R.B. issued a press release announcing that Reilly was being granted a leave of absence to work at the Labor Department.

Top Labor officials were at first taken by surprise by Reilly's homecoming. Then, late in the afternoon of May 19, one told me flatly, "Hugh Reilly is not coming back." Labor Secretary Ray Donovan, it was later learned, had checked around the Administration and discovered that Reilly's return lacked White House sanction. A high-level Donovan aide told me Dotson had apparently cooked up the switch with Ronald St. Cyr, his former deputy and now Acting Assistant Secretary for Labor-Management Relations. But Dotson's damage-control operation fell through. That evening, Donovan vetoed the transfer, saying St. Cyr had "acted beyond his authority."

So Reilly remains at the N.L.R.B., his prospects uncertain, while labor-leaning Democrats on key House committees have opened fire on Dotson.

The N.L.R.B. has always been a political hot spot, with Democratic Presidents tending to make pro-union appointments and Republicans inclining toward appointees favored by management. It is widely agreed, however, that the board's rulings and policies have, over the years, given business a large cumulative advantage. The labor law reform bill of 1978, which was filibustered to death in the Senate, was intended to halt that trend.

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Labor leaders, including A.F.L.-C.I.O. president Lane Kirkland, fear an even sharper right turn under the present Administration, with unionism itself becoming an issue. Reilly's appointment as solicitor was seen as a portent of such a shift. As Winn Newman, former general counsel of the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (I.U.E.), put it, the appointment "turns an agency whose purpose is to promote collective bargaining over to someone whose career has been devoted to destroying unionism." Or, as Representative William Ford of Michigan phrased it at a Congressional hearing on June 15: "You've taken a hired gun from the Right to Work Committee and put him in charge of the chicken coop."

Those descriptions are borne out by Reilly's involvement with the *Beck* case, which raises a question: If it was a conflict of interest in his new job with the N.L.R.B., hadn't it been one during the fifteen months he was with the Labor Department? Reilly began working there on November 16, 1981. He did not ask Federal Judge James Miller for permission to resign as chief counsel until March 4, 1983.

Not that Reilly tried to conceal the involvement. He reported it in the financial disclosure statement he filed with the department in May 1982, indicating that he was not being paid for his services. When I asked an expert at the Labor Department if that posed a conflict of interest, I was told that the department's code of ethics forbids outside employment "which would compromise the mission of the individual or of the agency or the appearance of impartiality." The expert said that Reilly's apparent conflict of interest had been kicked around informally in the Labor Department solicitor's office, which has jurisdiction in such matters, but that no formal ruling had been asked for or offered. "It becomes a judgment call," the expert said, with responsibility for the judgment resting at the assistant secretary level. Reilly was executive assistant to Dotson, who from early 1981 until his appointment last winter as N.L.R.B. chairman served as Assistant Secretary for Labor-Management Relations. But Dotson testified at a June 29 Congressional hearing that the conflict had not been his responsibility and that Donovan's advisers had known of and accepted it.

During his career in government, Dotson has had his own run-ins with labor. Before becoming Assistant Secretary, he had been a lawyer for Westinghouse, Western Electric and Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel, and most unionists consider his record at the Labor Department—especially his enforcement of pension laws and financial disclosure requirements—to have been pro-management. When the President named him N.L.R.B. chairman, Newman of the I.U.E. blasted him as a "unionbuster," and the teamsters complained that he harbored "a strong antiunion bias."

Reilly's antiunion record before coming to the department was vastly more blatant. He spent eight years with the Right to Work Foundation, which specializes in attacking unions in the courts. In the *Beck* case, he was winning an important victory: the communications workers' union was

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ordered to refund a large proportion of the money paid in lieu of dues by nonunion employees of the Bell System in Maryland. The court ruled that any money the union could not prove it had used to represent workers, rather than for political, social or other activities, had to be refunded.

Reilly's antiunion views weren't the only thing labor objected to. Union lawyers pointed out that his experience with the Right to Work Foundation had little relevance to the job of N.L.R.B. solicitor. As Rex Reed, executive vice president of the foundation, told me, "Abuse of compulsory unionism is the only kind of law we work on."

The post of solicitor has not been an important one, and does not require Senate confirmation. But on May 4 the N.L.R.B. voted 3 to 1 to modify an arrangement dating back to 1955 under which the board's general counsel had authority over the agency's court proceedings. That power is critical: the general counsel defends board rulings before appeals courts, and is also responsible for obtaining enforcement orders from the courts. Under the May 4 ruling, the general counsel must give the solicitor a week's notice and receive his approval before filing any court papers. The board also ordered that the solicitor's name appear on all briefs instead of the general counsel's, and it gave Dotson control over all personnel working on litigation.

The present general counsel is William Lubbers, a Jimmy Carter appointee. Criticized by business groups for an alleged pro-labor bias when he got the job, he has since gained high marks for his disinterested professionalism.

The three commissioners who voted to cut Lubbers down to size were Dotson, Robert F. Hunter and Howard Jenkins Jr. Hunter, a Reagan appointee and formerly chief aide to Orrin Hatch, the conservative chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, is generally credited with having masterminded the defeat of the labor law reform bill. He also wrote the section on labor in the Heritage Foundation's *Mandate for Leadership*, a 1,093-page right-wing agenda presented to President Reagan shortly after he took office, which was harshly critical of the Department of Labor: "Through the years it has allowed a general bias to develop in favor of organized labor, which represents only approximately one-fifth of the total labor force; this bias is also reflected in the department's general mistrust of the nature of business."

Jenkins, a Republican and the first black to pass the bar examination in his native Colorado, was appointed to the board by President Kennedy in 1963. At the time, he was seen as a moderate, but unionists fear he has drifted toward the right. "He's always gone along with whoever was running the show, and that seems to be what he's doing now," one told me. The fourth term of Jenkins, who is 67, ends in September. He is said to aspire to a fifth.

The lone holdout against the realignment was Don Zimmerman, who was chief labor aide to Senator Jacob Javits of New York from 1974 to 1980, when he was appointed to the board by President Carter, and who has been regarded as a swing vote rather than as a labor vote.

The fifth board member, Patricia Diaz Dennis, was sworn in May 5, the day after the vote. She is a former corporate labor lawyer from Los Angeles and, most recently, served as assistant general attorney for ABC television.

One of the ironies of the Reilly affair, at least in the minds of union leaders, is that they might have stopped Dotson's confirmation as commissioner if they had known about two antiunion letters he wrote.

In 1978, in the legal magazine *Corpus Juris*, Dotson claimed that unions are to blame for America's malaise: "Unionized labor relations, short-sighted demands, greed and debilitating work rules have been the major contributors to the decline and failure of once-healthy industries." He charged that "the scheme of labor relations in the United States bears no resemblance to what was intended by the framers of our basic labor law," and that "centralized, company-wide, hierarchical labor organizations" had replaced "employee-controlled unions on a local plant-by-plant basis."

In 1980, he wrote a letter to the *Journal of the American Bar Association* in which he said that the word "strike" had come to mean "a concerted effort employing violence, intimidation and political intervention to prevent people who want to work from working." The principal cause of this development, Dotson wrote, was the labor board's "selective enforcement and perversion of the labor statutes."

Neither letter had been unearthed by the anti-Dotson forces at the time of his confirmation hearings in the Senate, and so, in the absence of evidence of his unfitness, or that of Patricia Diaz Dennis, Lane Kirkland wrote Senator Hatch that the A.F.L.-C.I.O. would not testify against their confirmation. Nevertheless, he added:

> The sole claim of Mr. Dotson and Mrs. Dennis for consideration to serve on this quasi-judicial administrative agency is that both have had careers as employee lawyers that are unmarked by evident wrongdoing. So far as we have ascertained, neither nominee is a leader of the bar and neither has accomplishments in increasing labor peace or in protecting employee rights—the twin goals of the Federal labor laws. These nominations, so far as we can see, are rewards by the Administration to the reactionary businessmen and to the far right wing that the Administration delights to serve.

Besides kicking themselves for not discovering the letters, labor strategists are also rueful about their opposition last year to John Van de Water, Reagan's first choice to head the labor board and its chairman on a recess appointment for about a year. Van de Water is a Los Angeles management lawyer with a formidable record of beating union organizing drives. But he did not, on the board, show ideological stripes nearly so bright as Dotson's, and he would be well into his term by now if the unions had quickly gone along with his nomination. But that was last year.

Now Reilly's appointment as solicitor, the unprecedented grant of power to him and the discovery of his conflict of interest have stirred up what is left of labor-leaning official Washington as have few things in recent years.

Representatives William Clay of Missouri and Barney Frank of Massachusetts joined forces in mid-June to grill Dotson at a joint session of their subcommittees. They tried

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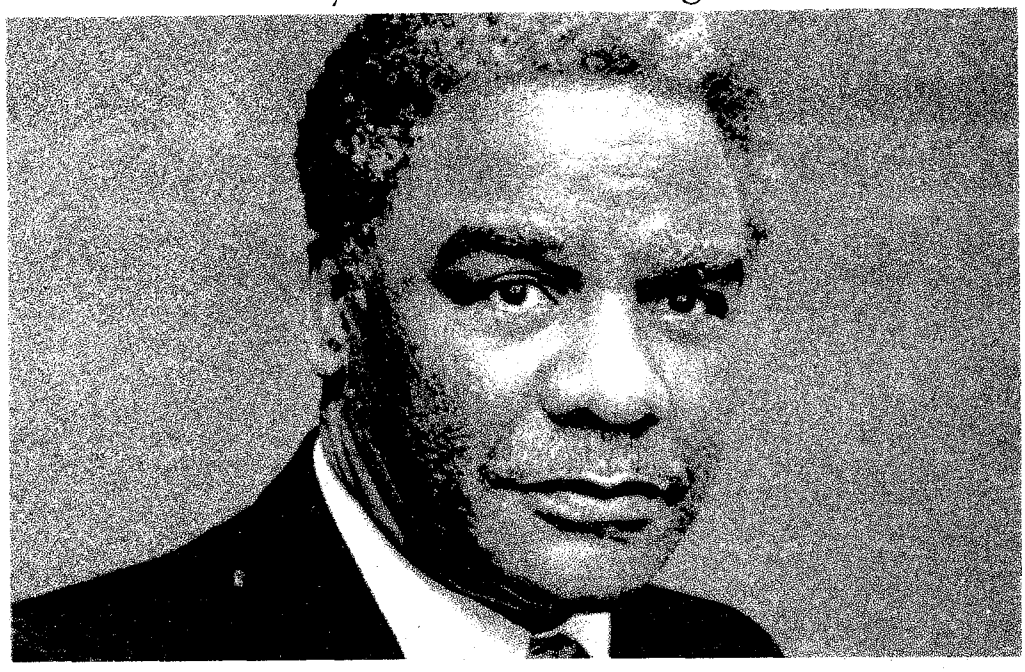
Mayor Harold Washington



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to find out why Dotson and the board had voted to expand the solicitor's power, but that effort was largely unsuccessful.

According to minutes obtained by the subcommittees after an extended quarrel with the N.L.R.B. over issues of confidentiality and executive privilege, on May 4 Dotson told his fellow board members that the general counsel's office had to be brought under control because its court pleadings often diverged from board rulings. There is wide and bipartisan agreement that such problems can arise. The general counsel's primary job is to act as a kind of civil prosecutor, gathering evidence of wrongdoing by labor or management in unionizing efforts, then filing charges and arguing before the board for punishment of the alleged malefactors. When the general counsel loses such a prosecution before the board, his staff must reverse itself and plead the board's position in court.

But Dotson's method of dealing with these problems has found few, if any, disinterested supporters, while his rhetorical overkill has got himself and his "reform" in trouble. On one occasion he told the other board members that before becoming chairman he had witnessed "some of the sleaziest tactics I have ever seen" by N.L.R.B. attorneys misrepresenting the board. That remark promptly generated a formal grievance from the board lawyers' professional association.

It provoked Representative William Ford to lecture Dotson on the meaning of "sleaze" until Dotson said he would drop the word from his characterization. But it was Barney Frank who really put Dotson on the griddle, demanding to know where, and in what cases, the chairman had seen deliberate misrepresentation of the board's position. Dotson said he couldn't name specific instances. Calmly admitting that "I have no cases" to cite, Dotson said he had learned of such misrepresentation from his fellow board members.

"Which of them?" Frank demanded.

"All of them," Dotson responded.

They had come to the hearing, presumably to support their chairman, and they flanked him at the witness table.

"We'll skip you, you don't count," Frank told Dennis, who had not yet joined the board when the May 4 vote was taken. Then he solemnly asked each of the other three if they had made such charges to Dotson. All three said they had not. Jenkins added that in perhaps half a dozen of the 40,000 or so cases he had dealt with there had been an accidental misunderstanding of the board's position. Zimmerman told of suggesting changes in the draft of a Supreme Court pleading and having all his language accepted without complaint.

The complete and stark repudiation left Dotson with no explanation for his assault on the general counsel's office, and two of the commissioners with no justification for having gone along with it.

Ford said he had little choice but to assume that Dotson had acted for ideological reasons, to swing the board toward management. "I begin to think that the people who say you're up to something are on to something," he told Dotson.

Clay, who is black, said: "I certainly wouldn't want an activist member of the Ku Klux Klan judging me in the courtroom, and I think this comes to about the same thing."

Since N.L.R.B. members serve five-year terms, Reagan's choices will be setting the nation's labor policy well into the next administration. But the Reilly affair has made many waves, and it is not clear how far to the right the new board will tilt. Dennis has said that she would have abstained rather than vote to expand Reilly's powers. Jenkins sounded conciliatory at the June 29 Congressional hearing. And Dotson denied that Reilly had ever been slated for any significant role in supervising the general counsel. That job would have gone to someone else in the solicitor's office, Dotson testified. But that claim was contradicted by many statements in board minutes and orders. The key question, perhaps, is how many board members will go along with the kind of scorched-earth pro-management policy that the records of Dotson and Reilly suggest they're after. □

WHILE SOMEONE ELSE IS EATING—III

The Story of Segundo & Magda

This is the third in a series of articles that will appear in The Nation *about how some people are being made to live in America today. The writers of the articles are all novelists or poets. They were not given "assignments"; they were asked to write about the human costs of President Reagan's policies, and they chose their subjects under that rubric. The idea was to free them from all the constraints of journalism save one: that of grounding their work in reality. Our aim was to gather an uneven collection, each piece as unique as the voice and the sensibility of the artist who wrote it.*

This article has been edited for length, but will be published in its entirety by Doubleday/Anchor Press in the collection entitled While Someone Else Is Eating.

EDWARD RIVERA

The trouble started one morning in May 1981, when Segundo lost his balance and fell in the passage between the bedroom and the bathroom. He wasn't hurt, but he felt dizzy and his head was hot. He thought he might be coming down with a virus, but decided against going back to bed.

While he was shaving, he noticed in the mirror that his sideburns were out of focus. In fact, his entire face was out of focus, no matter how many times he tilted his head left and right or leaned forward. He nicked the tip of his ear and finished shaving by holding the razor with both hands.

At breakfast, he told his wife, Magda, what had happened. She said his eyes looked watery, and suggested that

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he had a cold. "You should go back to bed," she said, adding that perhaps he should go to Dr. Murillo, an eye specialist who had an office on the Grand Concourse. Segundo said he'd rather wait and see. If he didn't feel better by the next morning, he'd go to the eye doctor. Today he was going to work. Just before he left, Magda squeezed a few drops of Murine into his eyes, and while he was in that passive, head-tilted position, she said he should come home by noon if he didn't feel better. He said he would.

By the time he got to the factory it was 9:05; he was thirty-five minutes late. It was the first time he had been late since 1979, when he started working for Bob and Roy, the brothers who owned Renowned Frocks. He was late because it had been a slow, tricky walk from his apartment building on Bruckner Boulevard in the Bronx to the subway station on Simpson Street, then an even trickier walk from the Times Square station to the factory five blocks away. Pedestrians and traffic on both sides of him looked blurred. Every time he started to cross a street, the roaring ghosts of cars, trucks and buses seemed to be coming straight at him.

He apologized for being late, and told his bosses that his train had broken down. The passengers had had to get off and wait for another train, which took a long time. A part of him wished he had told the truth, but he had a couple of reasons for not doing so. For one thing, he didn't like to discuss his personal problems at work; also, he didn't want special treatment, as though he were already an old man. He was only 50, at least ten years away from retirement.

Segundo took pride in his skills as a head shipping clerk. Bob and Roy, and before them the two old men for whom he'd worked for twenty-seven years, always told him that he was one of the best shipping clerks they'd ever hired, a real pro. And they didn't just praise him: they put their money where their mouths were. Every year he got a cost-of-living raise—usually $5 a week, but a few times, when business was booming, he received $10. Over the last thirty years his earnings had gone up to $200 a week, and that didn't include the $100 bonus he got every Christmas. Not bad for someone who had never gone to high school.

He hadn't been able to. In the mountain village in Puerto Rico where he spent the first twenty years of his life, there was no secondary school. He was orphaned at the age of 8 and had gone to work as a field hand as soon as he finished grammar school. When he arrived in New York, it was a little late to start high school; anyway, he didn't know any English. It took him years to learn to speak it adequately, and even then, he spoke it only when he had to.

He had joined the union pension plan a long time ago, and he expected to collect something when he retired. And there was Social Security, which, with careful budgeting (and he was good at that), would help keep him and Magda secure for the rest of their lives. He had nothing to complain about, though he did regret that the two men for whom he'd worked for twenty-seven years had retired and closed down their factory.

They always told him they'd take care of him, by which he understood that they would give him a parting bonus, a kind of unofficial pension, something off the books, when they retired. But business started going badly for them and so when they retired, in late 1978, they told him they couldn't afford to take care of him. They couldn't even afford to give him any severance pay. But they did talk to Bob and Roy of Renowned Frocks, who had a loft upstairs in the same building. The two older men put in a good word for Segundo, praised his skills and attitude to the skies. A month later, when Bob and Roy's head shipping clerk quit or retired, Roy called Segundo at home and told him he had a job. Same type of work, same hours and days, same pay. Segundo took it.

He and Magda, who also worked, saved what little they could for their retirement. They hoped to go back to Puerto Rico (they couldn't see themselves living out their old age in New York) after their son and daughter were out on their own. Magda had inherited a small plot of land on the southeast coast of the island from her mother, and they planned to build a house on that plot when they retired. He still remembered a thing or two about farming, and maybe he could do a little planting. It would keep him busy, and they would save money on food. It might even bring them some income.

When Segundo got home that day, he still saw ghosts out of the corners of his eyes, and he still felt dizzy and hot.

The following morning, he and Magda went to see Dr. Murillo, the ophthalmologist. After subjecting Segundo to four hours of intricate tests with all kinds of instruments, Dr. Murillo told him that he'd probably had a stroke in his sleep. Dr. Murillo called a colleague, Dr. Kawesch, a neurologist-psychiatrist in Mamaroneck who was affiliated with Albert Einstein Hospital in the Bronx. But Dr. Kawesch told him that Einstein could not admit Segundo

DRAWINGS BY FRANCES JETTER

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right away: its cardiology wards had no empty beds. So Dr. Murillo told Segundo to call him in the morning to report his symptoms. Under no condition was he to go back to work.

Five days after he first experienced the eye trouble, he was admitted to Albert Einstein Hospital; he ended up spending two weeks there. The doctors put him through a battery of tests, and they took chest X-rays, blood samples, urine samples and the rest. They gave him pills to slow down his heartbeat and pills to bring down his blood pressure; they put him on a strict, tasteless diet; and they kept him in bed, on an intravenous pole, or in a wheelchair for most of the two weeks.

When he was released, he felt much better, though not completely cured. The dizziness was gone, but he still had fuzzy peripheral vision—and always would, the doctors told him: he'd have to be careful crossing streets from now on. The last piece of advice—actually an order—the doctors gave him before sending him home was that he must not go back to work. Ever. As far as they were concerned (and this included Dr. Kawesch, who was now his official M.D.), he was a retired worker, a former shipping clerk. If he did not do as they said, he would have another stroke, and he would either die or become a vegetable, which Segundo thought was worse than dying. He could take his pick, they said, but he shouldn't look at them if he disobeyed their orders.

Which of course he didn't.

It took Segundo a few days to recover from the disorientation brought on by two weeks in the hospital. When he was able to conduct a coherent conversation, he called the factory and told Bob and Roy what the doctors had told him. His bosses accepted his resignation with deep regret.

Now, he faced the practical problem of making up for the loss of his income. For the last three years, Magda had worked at a Bronx high school as a cook's assistant, clean-up woman and table attendant. Her salary before taxes was $97 a week. Their son and daughter, who were still in high school, held part-time jobs. All that income was hardly enough to offset the loss of Segundo's earnings. Maybe Social Security disability benefits would make up the difference.

He had all the medical evidence he needed to qualify for those benefits. Probably more than he needed. Dr. Kawesch and the cardiologists at Einstein had compiled enough proof of his condition to convince anyone that he was entitled. "Even this President we're stuck with," Dr. Kawesch said.

A few months after Segundo applied for benefits, he received an appointment with a doctor who worked for the Social Security Administration on contract. This doctor was a very busy man, Segundo discovered. Standing room only in his waiting room, and a rapid turnover of patients. Segundo wondered if there wasn't a revolving door or a turnstile inside the examination room.

The doctor and his assistant put Segundo through some of the same tests he'd been given at Einstein, only they did them much faster. The doctor asked Segundo a few quick questions about his condition, but he seemed bored by the answers. It was all over in less than ten minutes. The doctor's assistant told him that Social Security would let him know shortly of the results.

Two weeks went by and he heard nothing, so he called the Social Security office. The man he spoke with told him his case was still pending. He had to be patient, the man said, because there were many other cases like his. Segundo, eager not to offend the man, said he understood and apologized for making a pest of himself. He said he wasn't asking for special treatment, God forbid. But—well, he did have a problem paying the rent and his other bills. The official told Segundo his case was being processed. A couple more weeks.

Three weeks later, he forced himself to call again. A different official told him his case was still under consideration. Segundo waited another three weeks, and called again. The same story. He never spoke to the same person twice.

A month passed. Then he received a form letter with a docket number, which in intimidating official prose informed him that his application for benefits had been "disallowed." It seemed the doctor who specialized in hasty examinations and the board of final decisions had found nothing seriously wrong with his heart or brain (no mention was made of his impaired vision). The letter implied he could go back to work whenever he felt like it.

Segundo thought they must have made a mistake—mixed up his case with someone else's. That kind of thing was bound to happen in such a busy organization. So he went to the Social Security office the next day. An official told him he had the right to appeal. He filled the form out that afternoon and mailed it that night.

After another long wait, he was sent to another overworked Social Security doctor for another turnstile examination; three months later he was again notified that he was not qualified. Same form letter, same reasons. Segundo went to the Social Security office again, but as he had expected, a functionary there had nothing new to tell him.

That night he called his brother-in-law, an auto mechanic, who had retired because of a condition he called "pernicious anemia." He also had a heart condition—angina something. He had qualified for benefits without too much trouble. But that was before Social Security was put on a tight budget by "some bastard and his pack up in Washington. I leave it to you to guess who. And your case came along too late to do you any good."

His brother-in-law suggested that Segundo get a second opinion, and recommended his cardiologist, who didn't come cheap. Segundo no longer had his own medical insurance, but he was covered by Magda's plan. Still, the deductible had to come out of his and Magda's savings (their "retirement money"), which had dwindled to a few hundred dollars.

His brother-in-law's cardiologist gave it to Segundo straight: his heart was "seriously swollen" (from poor circulation); so were his ankles (Segundo could see that for himself); he had a heart murmur (he didn't need another doctor to tell him that); his blood pressure was too high (he knew that too). Nothing new, in other words, except the bill. Segundo hoped he wouldn't get into the expensive habit of consulting more doctors just to prove to S.S. what S.S. should have known.

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The cardiologist submitted his findings to Social Security, and when the response came, it contained one hopeful note: Segundo's case would be reopened. Social Security would let him know of its decision as soon as it reached one.

The last time he called to ask about the progress of this latest application, he was told his case was still pending. He almost lost his temper, but he got hold of himself. Giving some anonymous official a piece of his mind wouldn't help him one bit. It would only make his blood pressure shoot up and his heart and ankles swell some more. So he said a few polite words and hung up.

Not long after he left Einstein, he applied for veterans' benefits. He had served two years in the Army, eighteen months of that in Korea, so he was surely entitled to some help from the Veterans Administration. But at his hearing, a V.A. official told him that according to its records he had died in 1963. Segundo said he hadn't died in 1963, or any other year. "I'm standing right here alive, as you can see," he said. "Do I look dead to you?"

The official told Segundo he must submit proof that he was really the person he said he was. "We'll need your fingerprints," he said. Segundo gave them his fingerprints. He was told that they would be sent to the F.B.I. and that the V.A. would be in touch with him within a few weeks.

He is still waiting. Whenever he calls the V.A., he is told that his case is still pending. He calls less often these days. Like the Social Security Administration, the V.A. is a very busy outfit, and he doesn't want to make a pest of himself.

Segundo also went to the Department of Social Services to apply for welfare. After the red tape and the embarrassing questions, he and Magda were found to be qualified for benefits: $197 a month, a boon. Four months later, though, they received a letter telling them their benefits had been discontinued because their assets exceeded Magda's earnings. Assets? Segundo hadn't declared his car, a 1972 Oldsmobile he had bought secondhand in 1974.

They had caught him red-handed. He requested a hearing and explained to the caseworker that he rarely used the car, mostly to pick up his daughter at the subway when she came home from work at 9 o'clock. It was cheaper than having her take a taxi, and safer than letting her wait for the bus.

The caseworker said that people on welfare were not supposed to own cars, so he would have to sell his if he wanted to remain on the rolls. Nothing he said could change her mind. She was only following regulations. End of hearing.

Segundo sold the Olds for $80 to a young man who would probably wreck it within a month. But when he presented the "bill of liquidation" to the caseworker, she told him he and Magda were no longer eligible for benefits. He had been classified as a welfare fraud, a very serious charge. He could apply again after a hearing, but right now he shouldn't waste his time and theirs.

After a while, Segundo decided that maybe the Social Security officials were right: maybe he should go back to work, at least part time. His idleness, he suspected, might be more harmful than working. Magda's second cousin Marina and her husband, Nemesio, owned a small grocery store in Queens. They worked six days a week, sometimes seven,

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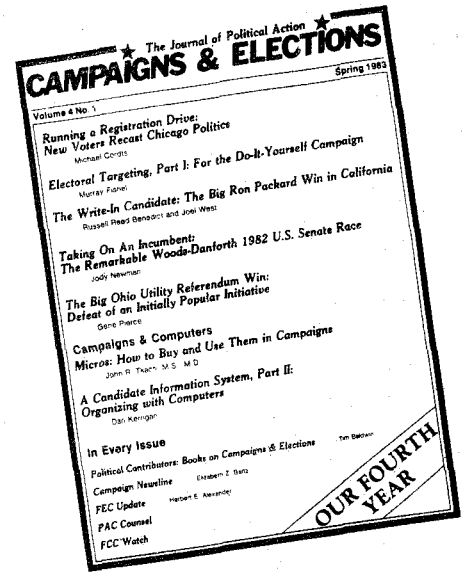
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and their profits were barely that: not worth all the hours they put in. But they preferred to work as a team, a husband-and-wife operation, without bosses.

One day Segundo called them to ask if they could use an assistant for a few hours a week. He made it sound as if he were looking for a hobby, but he was putting them on the spot. In the first place, they didn't need an assistant; in the second, they couldn't afford one. They had turned down others looking for part-time work in their hole in the wall. But Segundo wasn't a needy stranger; he was practically a member of their family. They'd known him a long time, and they were aware of his and Magda's situation. So they gave him a job. No more than fifteen hours a week, though, and they couldn't pay him more than $40. He understood.

He went to work for Marina and Nemesio, commuting by bus to Queens. He got there at 8 in the morning, an hour after they opened for business, and left by noon, though sometimes he hung around till 1 or 2, having nothing better to do with himself. His duties were simple: opening boxes of food and beverages, stocking the shelves, pulling things down from the shelves, taking things to the cellar, bringing others back up, sweeping, dusting, wiping, scrubbing. Once in a while, when there was a flurry of business, he helped Marina and Nemesio behind the crowded, narrow counter. Otherwise he stayed out of the way, because there wasn't really room for three in the store. Sometimes he overdid it, and Marina and Nemesio had to remind him of his heart condition. If something happened to him in their store, they'd feel responsible. He got the message and slowed down.

One day he took a train to Mamaroneck; he was having dizzy spells again. Dr. Kawesch told him his blood pressure was way up and his heart was a little larger. In fact, he said, his condition had deteriorated. Had he been pushing himself too much? Had he gone back to work? Segundo said he hadn't. He was afraid that if he told the truth, Dr. Kawesch would wash his hands of his case. The doctor prescribed the usual and told him the usual: take it easy, take your pills, find distractions like TV and dominoes to keep from worrying. Segundo thanked him and went home.

That night Marina and Nemesio called to tell Segundo he shouldn't come to work the next day, or ever. Earlier that day, while he was in Mamaroneck, a couple of familiar faces had paid a return visit to the store. The one with the gun made Marina and Nemesio lie on their stomachs while his friend emptied the cash register. On their way out, while Marina and Nemesio stared at sawdust, the two visitors helped themselves to a few bags of potato chips and fried pork rinds. "See you next time," they said.

Marina and Nemesio didn't bother calling the police, because the first time they had been robbed, the police took down the details of the holdup and never came back. Maybe they couldn't be bothered; it was a busy precinct. So Marina and Nemesio decided to liquidate their business and go back to where they came from: a small village in Puerto Rico. Two months after they had failed to notify the police, they packed up and left.

Segundo and Magda are pretty sure they would have done the same thing. They haven't given up on the notion of going back home when their son and daughter are on their own and his Social Security benefits start coming in. He's patient. "What's a little patience?" he says.

"Thirty-two years," Magda says. And they leave it at that, for now. □

ANTI-SEMITISM AND IDENTITY

Jewish State, State of Jewishness

STANLEY DIAMOND

Leopards break into the temple and drink the sacrificial chalices dry; this occurs repeatedly, again and again: finally, it can be reckoned upon beforehand and becomes part of the ceremony. —*Franz Kafka*

If Jews have earned anything in their tormented history it is the right to identify themselves. They have been defined in so many ways by so many others—as heretics and as chosen, as devout and debased, as killers and cowards, as passive and aggressive, as arch-capitalists and architects of communism, as intellectuals and buffoons, as geniuses and brokers. But above all, they have been defined as subverters of civil society (and that, at least, is a beginning). T.S. Eliot thought that free-thinking Jews were necessary to a proper society, but that their number should be limited.

These people, who live everywhere and are, in the last analysis, at home nowhere, nonetheless maintain a capacity to recognize one another almost instantly. To non-Jews, this must seem uncanny—all those different languages, but always a single language; all those apparently distinct customs, and yet what seems to be a unifying consciousness. It is this isolating ubiquity, this rootlessness, that lies behind Sartre's statement that Jewish suffering is the worst of all suffering. He was referring to the nature of the suffering. Obviously, the brutality of oppression is not confined to Jews. But Sartre's meaning, as I understand it, and my own, reflect the universal scattering of Jews, the lack of a cultural center, the absence of allies when allies are desperately needed, the accumulating pressure on the dispersed few for 2,000 years. Hence the incessant and curious question—what is a Jew? Who am I? The answer: a people without a culture (a text is not a culture), without a society, haunted by archaic references, trying to live in abstractions and, hav-

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ing been close to extinction on several occasions, still maintaining an indomitable passion for survival. That, and the necessity for dissimulation, constitute the agony (and irony) of Jewish life: the unrelieved compulsion to measure oneself against the other. At least, until recently. For with the emergence of a so-called Jewish state, the state of being Jewish takes on new meaning, and new decisions have to be made.

Marx traced the unifying consciousness of the Jews to the market, an idea which has a certain residual truth—for the market reinforces connections. A medieval rabbi in Paris might have given a letter of credit to a Crusader, who could have exchanged it for the local currency in Jerusalem. The Jew as a mercantile agent does reflect a certain role, but Marx's notion that capitalism and Judaism—or being Jewish—are functionally related is false. Marx makes a category mistake here—for there is a historical correlation between the rise of capitalism and the positioning of the Jew, but it is not a functional correlation. The interior exile of the Jews, barred from owning land and from most occupations, led to their brokerage role. But the purpose of the accumulation of money was never accumulation itself. Rather, the iconization of the family—the undergirding of domestic felicity, with the family serving as the vehicle of Jewish survival and, in a sense, as a congregation—was the motive for mercantile activity. (Accordingly, Shakespeare makes it clear that Shylock's tragedy was not the loss of his money but the loss of his daughter, i.e., of his family and his religion, the two being linked, and therefore the loss of his self-respect.)

On the other hand, there is a functional correlation between Protestantism and capitalism, most apparent in the early phases of each movement. Sheer individual accumulation, as a sign of being elect—as in Calvinism—differs entirely from the collective Jewish notion of being chosen. However, it would be just as wrong to assume that a functional correlation is a causal correlation as it would be to assume that a historical correlation is a functional correlation. Protestantism did not cause capitalism; they both sprang out of the same ground—which is, of course, not the case with Judaism.

Thus, Marx's observation is limited, but not anti-Semitic. He never penetrated to the core of anti-Semitism as the symptom of a failure in the cultural structures of civilization itself. Socioeconomic transformation was, and is, necessary in the struggle against anti-Semitism; but unless that serves as the ground for the transformation of the symbolic character of civilization in the context of daily life, the problem of anti-Semitism cannot be demythologized and solved.

Buried within states, the very presence of the Jews overreaches the boundaries of states, and, as the experience of Jews in the Soviet Union inadvertently reveals, cannot be explained by class alone. Russian Jews are condemned for their "cosmopolitanism," that uncanny feature of Jewish existence, regardless of their position in the Soviet state.

At first glance, it may seem that the identity of the Jew has no substance at all and is merely the ambivalent projection of gentiles about Jews, and hence, of course, about gentiles as well. This ambivalence reveals the storied existence of the Jews as the *unresolved* primitive myth of Western civilization, a myth without a resolving ritual, a myth which is therefore acted out to the climax of self-destruction in the polities of the West. The Holocaust and Hiroshima were parallel but not identical expressions of that destruction: the Japanese were, for a moment, Jews; and at that same moment, the Jews died again, at Hiroshima. What defines the *resolved* primitive myth is the ambivalent structure of meanings compressing the contradictions of human existence into a prototragic statement that, in its awareness and integrity, becomes its own transcendence.

In primitive societies, ambivalence is resolved in rituals that contain within human boundaries, and then dissolve, the polarities of the cycles of life and death, birth and rebirth, the tragic and the comic, nature and culture, the young and the old, male and female, creation and destruction. Primitive ritual creates culture; it makes human life possible and the symbol substantial; it is the cauldron of language. Ritual is constitutive; it brings human consciousness beyond mere biological awareness; it is the fundamental realization of the human essence; it deploys all the arts of humanity in the effort to create and recreate humanity. This is what Marx missed.

In civilization, these rituals, and the penetrating, everyday existential insight into the human imperatives that demand their creation, no longer exist. Contemporary secularism, bureaucracy and the labor-divided technocratic polity—totalitarian institutions—drive out the meanings inherent in the expression and experience of ambivalence. Therefore, projections of the frustrations lived in Western civilization become catastrophic—anti-Semitism becomes catastrophic. Only the killing or expulsion of the Jews can bring a moment of peace, and the illusion of cultural meaning. But this

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cannot save the gentile; it can only render him passive in the face of the inhuman structures that oppress him and deprive him of his humanity. For in killing the Jew, or in turning away from the killing of the Jew, he does not confront his own humanity; he obliterates it. If the dynamic of fascism had not driven Hitler into world war, the slaughter of the Jews in Germany would not have moved the world to action. The gentile refuses to confront, and is rendered socially incapable of working through, the conflicts whose resolution and transcendence are the conditions for his maturity. He seeks and, of course, finds easier answers: the totalizing state, the concept of the collective mass, the reality of regimentation. Fascism is the result.

Fascism represents a political, as opposed to a primitive, myth; its ritual was war in the name of the renewal of the "nation"—actually, of the state. Its meanings were the meanings of death. The vast celebrations of pseudo-union shaped by the Nazis, the rallying of the people from the top down, the elaborate signals, the commanding signs of pseudo-integration (as opposed to symbolic reciprocity)—all reveal the frustrations of a civilized people hunting for meaning and inevitably failing, using the machinery of the state and falling victim to the state. It is only by grasping the failure of the rituals of advanced civilization that we can understand the alternatives to them. The "National" in National Socialism was in reality the state, and "Socialism" meant incorporative militarization as Germany embarked on its imperial mission to colonize Europe.

As Salvador Dali put it, the ritual character of cannibalism (the transubstantiation) is reduced by fascism to political murder, the consumption of whole peoples. The experience and the definition of fascism, said Dali, is the mistaking of ritual cannibalism for literal cannibalism. It is illuminating that Heidegger misunderstood this, and viewed National Socialism as a rebirth, a renewal of the German nation, and misinterpreted its rituals as tribal.

Indeed, the age-old dichotomy Jew-gentile (the Jews always singular, the gentiles always plural) is itself the ground for a ritual integration that finds no form. The tensions of society disappear into a mass grave; they create nothing. This destruction, this slaughter, is the mode of the political myth, which ends in death; it cannot be interpreted as a ritual sacrifice of which the Jews were the objects. Mass killing is the opposite of sacrifice. Sacrifice is limited by its very nature; it is a donation, an offering, a recognition of the importance of human life—and the voluntary giving of it for a value beyond the self. Sacrifice is the creation of meaning; slaughter is its negation.

Hence, the existence of the Jews remains a mystery to the gentiles. This mystery is intensified by the fact that the Jews fathered Christianity and then imposed upon the gentiles the rigors of a religion they themselves had rejected. The Jews have remained the dissenters in Christian consciousness, both the authors and the killers of the dream, and thus easy objects for the rage of unresolved ambivalence that the rituals of Christianity cannot transcend.

Civilization is so starved for ritual, for the resolution of ambivalence, for the constitution of transcendent meanings in human life, and so ignorant of the human condition, that it (we) will seize upon any object for secular worship. But in the objectification of the Jew, the catastrophic objectification of humanity, civilization climaxes in despair and self-destruction.

Of course, any object can be adopted as the locus of unresolved ritual. Anti-Semitism is not a Jewish problem; it is a civilizational problem. The morbidity of the attitude toward Jews intensifies with particular class, caste or religious distinctions, which radicals and liberals typically assume to be the basis of anti-Semitism. However, they are not the basis; they serve merely as the occasions for the venting of the fury that builds up in the ritually deprived and desymbolized consciousness of the civilized: the Jews, it is said, are middlemen, parasites; the Jews are rich but they do not really work; the Jews are disloyal and unpatriotic, yet they control society; and so on. These explanations explain nothing; they only situate the object in a projected social world wherein the helplessness of the gentile is ascribed to the control of the Jew. Destroying the Jew, symbolically or physically, takes on the appearance of a revolutionary act, a pseudo-liberating act, darkly resonant with meaning. The fury, which has to be explained, is generated by the repression of ambivalence and the construction of meaning, and therefore of ritual resolution. This, in turn, demands the deconstruction of a totalizing civilization with its absolutist, and imposed, political mythologies.

Not long ago the intelligently radical, gentile wife (who until that moment I had never thought of as a gentile) of a friend said unequivocally that Israel is the most debased society in the world today. I pointed out (which she of course knew) that the behavior of Israel could hardly be worse than the behavior of the United States, the Soviet Union and other states since World War II. Her sarcasm toward Israel can only be described as the displacement of a veiled, unself-conscious, *innocent* anti-Semitism. Hating Israel takes some of the edge off the desperation she experiences in her own society. But this inauthentic condemnation of Israel—as the supposedly Jewish state—should not be confused with a profound critique of Israeli militarism. The Jewish state is one thing; the state of being Jewish quite another.

For Jews, all historical definitions have dissolved, just as all anthropological definitions have failed. The idea of a Jewish nation has been absorbed into the Jewish state, a state formed in the mold of the nineteenth-century nation-state, dominated by the brutal notion of territoriality, by the realities of class, by aggressive-defensive maneuvering in the militarized world-capitalist system of nation-states; a state that redefines the ethnic groups it has been able to mobilize, while generating a new political myth. Nor is the religious definition of Jews any longer impressive; it is ridden with obvious contradictions. Above all, an unprecedented polarization is taking place: the emergence of the Jewish state; the increasing intensity of the dwindling number of practicing religious Jews; the massive cultural assimilation—bourgeois cultural assimilation—of Jews in Europe and America; the more gradual, politically troubled assimilation (a kind of

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'If you had spent $2 million a day every day since Christ was born, you would still have spent less than President Reagan wants the American people to believe the Pentagon can spend efficiently in seven years.'

Following is an abridgement of a commencement address delivered by Marian Wright Edelman, President, Children's Defense Fund, to the graduates of Milton Academy in Massachusetts. The address appears in The Nation *courtesy of David Mandel. For the full text, please write Children's Defense Fund, 122 C Street, N.W., Washington DC 20001.*

You are graduating into a nation and world teetering on the brink of moral and economic bankruptcy. Since 1980, our President and Congress have been turning our national plowshares into swords and been bringing good news to the rich at the expense of the poor. An escalating arms race and nuclear proliferation hold hostage not only the future we adults hold in trust for our children, but also the present that is, for many millions of our young in America and throughout the world, one of relentless poverty and deprivation.

Hunger is the enemy faced daily by hundreds of millions of people throughout the world. Children are the major victims. Our misguided national and world choices are literally killing children daily. UNICEF says that every *day* last year more than 40,000 young children died from malnutrition and infection. For every one who died, six now live on in hunger and ill health, which will be forever etched upon their lives. A recent study of child deaths by the Maine Department of Human Services says that poor children in America die at a rate three times that of non-poor children, and that poverty is the ultimate cause of death for 11,000 American children each year. This is more child deaths over five years than the number of American battle deaths during the Vietnam War.

Yet governments throughout the world, led by our own, spend over $600 billion a year on arms while an estimated 1 billion of our world's people live in poverty and 600 million are under- or unemployed.

Where is the human commitment and political will to find the relative pittance of money needed to protect children? What kind of world allows 40,000 children to die needlessly every day? UNICEF estimates that for $6 billion a year we could save 20,000 children a day by 1990 by applying scientific and technological breakthroughs in oral rehydration therapy, universal child immunization, promotion of breastfeeding and mass use of child growth charts. At home, where are the strong political voices speaking out for investing in children rather than bombs; mothers rather than missiles?

In its first year, the Reagan Administration proposed $11 billion in cuts in preventive children's and lifeline support programs for poor families; the Congress enacted $9 billion in cuts.

In its second year, the Reagan Administration proposed $9 billion in cuts in these same programs; the Congress enacted $1 billion.

In its third year, the President is proposing $3.5 billion in new cuts in these same programs.

It is my strong view that the American people have been sold a set of false choices by our national leaders who tell us we must choose between jobs and peace; between filling potholes in our streets and cavities in our children's teeth; between day care for five million latchkey children and home care for millions of senior citizens living out their lives in the loneliness of a nursing home; between arms control and building the MX! There are other choices—fairer choices—that you and I must insist our political leaders make.

While slashing programs serving the neediest children, the President and Congress found $750 billion to give untargeted tax cuts mostly to corporations and non-needy individuals. And the Reagan Administration is trying to convince the American people to give the Pentagon $2 trillion over a seven-year period in the largest arms buildup in peacetime history. Do you know how much money $2 trillion is? If you had spent $2 million a day every day since Christ was born, you would still have spent less than President Reagan wants the American people to believe the Pentagon can spend efficiently in seven years.

When President Reagan took office, we were spending $18 million an hour on defense.

This year, we are spending $24 million an hour.

Next year, President Reagan wants to spend $28 million an hour. The House Democratic leadership wants to spend "only" $27 million an hour and they are being labeled "soft" on defense.

By 1988, if the President has his way, we will be spending $44 million an hour on defense; 63 percent more on defense and 22 percent less on poor children and poor families. Just one hour's worth of President Reagan's proposed defense increase in military spending would pay for free school lunches for 19,000 children for a school year. A day's worth of his proposed defense increase would pay for a year's worth of free school lunches for almost a half a million low income students. A week's worth of his proposed defense spending could buy a fully equipped micro computer for every classroom of low income children in the United States, assuming twenty-five children to a classroom.

Just as I believe we ought to weigh military nonessentials against civilian essentials—and apply the same standards of national purpose, efficiency and effectiveness to military programs as we do to domestic ones—I also believe that the non-needy should bear a fair portion of the burden of economic recovery. They have not.

C.D.F. is seeking enactment this year of a Children's Survival Bill (H.R. 1603 and S. 572) to restore carefully selected children's programs to alleviate some of the child suffering we and others have documented. All of these programs could be paid for by taking away the politically sacrosanct three-martini business lunch whose deductibility costs American taxpayers $3.2 billion in lost revenue each year. Fewer martinis might in fact contribute to executive health and productivity! Every day of delay of the individual tax cut costs $100 million in Federal revenues.

We Americans must confront and let our senators and representatives know what choices we want them to make for us and for America this year. This year's decisions on military and social program spending will dictate the nation's choices, indeed shape the national character, for decades to come. They are far too important to leave to the politicians or the experts.

As you leave Milton Academy, I hope you will care deeply—as citizens and as parents—about the choices those who represent you make; about the needs of those who lack a voice in our society; and about our national mission in a world plagued by hunger, joblessness and militarism.

But caring is not enough. You must break down big problems into smaller, manageable pieces and go step by systematic step. Pick a piece of the problem that you can help solve while trying to see how your piece fits into the broader social change puzzle. Tailor your remedies to the specific problems that you can do something about, and build from there over time. Recognize that getting change is no guarantee of keeping change. A nuclear freeze is only a first step toward achieving responsible arms limitation agreements. It will take never ending citizen monitoring to protect our children against nuclear disaster. Understand that there are no short cuts to curing most of our social and economic problems. Thorough homework—good facts coupled with good analysis—is essential if good remedies are to follow and if an effective case is to be made for a particular cause.

Be sure to follow through. Most institutions, public or private, are seldom self-policing. Being a change agent for the disenfranchised or for responsible arms control means being a good pest; wearing down those you want to do something. And you always have a better chance of getting something done if you are specific. Address one problem at a time; outline what the person responsible can and should do; have thought through why it is in their self-interest to do it; don't mind doing the work for them; and make sure they can take credit for getting it done.

Finally do not give up or ever cease believing that each of us—as individuals—can make a critical difference if we simply care enough, and bring to that caring skill, targeted action and persistence.

Sojourner Truth, my role model, was a slave woman who could neither read nor write, but never gave up talking or fighting against slavery or second-class treatment of women.

Once a heckler told Sojourner that he cared no more for her anti-slavery talk "than for a fleabite." "Maybe not," was her answer, "but the lord willing, I'll keep you scratching." The lord willing today, we should keep those who would turn their backs on the social "outcasts" of our society and who threaten world survival scratching. Enough fleas, biting strategically, can make even the biggest dog—biggest community institutions or government—mighty uncomfortable. If they flick some of us off and others of us keep coming back, we will begin to get the needs of children and the poor heard and attended to; and to oil the creaks of our institutions that many say no longer work. It is you and I who must make them work.

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devouring, actually) of Jews in the Soviet Union. These contradictions are breaking apart the unifying consciousness that has marked Jews throughout the world.

For Jews, it is no longer a question of being defined, but of defining themselves, outside all conventional categories. Sartre, remember, insisted that in order to find their own meanings, Jews must begin with the assumption that civilization is a disaster. The consequences of that assumption are clear, but Sartre could not reach them, for here he had the reticence of the heartbroken gentile. What are the consequences? Existential to the core.

Jews who have learned the reasons for their suffering will constitute the saving remnant (not, as Ben-Gurion said, the 10 percent of American Jewry who, by migration, could rescue Zionism, nor the Ashkenazi sabra who was said to be worth ten Diaspora Jews). The marginality of the Jew is expressed with tremendous force in the works of Freud, Marx and Einstein, who deconstructed all received definitions of the civilized individual, civilized society and civilized grounding in time and space. The ultimate irony is that civilization as we know it has transmogrified the insight of Einstein into a ritual of death, that of Marx into an imprisonment of the human spirit, and that of Freud into a prediction of human failure on a universal scale (and there are Jews who have been among the engineers of this destruction).

The state of being Jewish, if it is to be achieved, demands an unrelenting opposition to the exploitative structures of all states whose deformed and incomplete rituals continue to point only toward death, and now toward the death of humanity. Jews who have already undergone genocidal assaults, and who conclude that civilization is a disaster, will search for transcendent, that is, human meanings, and for the humane union of theory and practice. Only a few Jews will identify themselves by participating in this struggle against the essentialized structures of the modern world. But they will be joined by others, and they will join those who become Jews in the definition of the medieval rabbi—denying any history except that which is morally willed—"I will accept that person as a Jew who lays claim to the title." A recovery of identity in the dissolution of identity. □

Politics

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

and Walter Mondale campaigns as an experienced and pro-labor pol, they all are committed to the corporate system, to government welfare for big business, to pacifier programs for the poor and to a globalist foreign policy designed to maximize corporate profits. Not one of them is as progressive as Robert Kennedy in the 1968 primaries, George McGovern in 1972 or Fred Harris in 1976—candidates who tried to inject the issue of social and economic justice into the national debate and who were able to mobilize grass-roots support.

The second option is to back a third party. The Citizens Party, for example, has articulated an anticorporate program, enlisted activists in chapters around the country and even elected a few local officials. But those small triumphs do not add up to a national strategy. The odds against third parties winning in this country are staggering: witness the fate of the Progressive and States' Rights parties in 1948, of the Peace and Freedom Party in 1968 and of the American Independent Party in 1972. Their failures were not the result of bad intentions or lack of organizing skill; America's winner-take-all electoral system (unlike proportional representation found in many European democracies) gives minority parties no voice in government. It should be apparent that a vote cast for the Citizens Party in a national election is a vote wasted. There will be no "Green-ing" of America.

The third option is to work with grass-roots and public interest movements that focus on specific issues and ignore the Presidential primaries altogether. That is the Saul Alinsky/Ralph Nader theory of electoral politics: let Tweedledum and Tweedledee fight it out, and then attack the winner—with protest demonstrations, scorecards rating his or her record, letter-writing and lobbying campaigns. But for those interested in building a coherent left that has a chance of taking power in Washington, the ad hoc nature of those tactics is a serious drawback. Grass-roots groups have often dissipated their energies by working at cross-purposes, and have failed to unite behind a common political agenda. Their power is diffused and lacks an institutional context.

Is there a way to merge the strengths of these three options while avoiding their defects?

We believe there is: a "party-within-a-party" strategy. Contrary to popular assessments, the last decade has seen a tremendous amount of progressive political activity. Campaigns for rent control, regulation of toxic chemicals in the workplace and the community, tax reform, a nuclear freeze and the Equal Rights Amendment have employed a wide variety of tactics and won many victories. Groups like NOW, ACORN, Mobilization for Survival, Mass. Fair Share and 9 to 5 have involved millions of Americans, raising their political awareness and honing their activist skills. In recent years, some of these groups have moved into the electoral arena, providing funds, endorsements and campaign workers for issue-oriented candidates. Under the

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party-within-a-party strategy, they would unite in a permanent coalition within the Democratic Party, supporting a program of economic democracy. The coalition would support and run candidates in party primaries, initially in local, state and Congressional races. By mobilizing its supporters and launching massive voter registration drives in these campaigns, it would work to defeat Reagan in 1984 but not waste time and effort on the Presidential primaries.

Similar coalitions have been established at the state and local levels. Groups like the New Jersey Public Interest Political Action Committee (PIPAC), the Montana Committee for an Effective Legislature (MONTCEL), the Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC), the Illinois Public Action Council (IPAC) and California's Campaign for Economic Democracy (C.E.D.) have coalesced women, blacks, Hispanics, environmentalists, neighborhood and tenant activists and senior citizens into effective political forces. Working with labor unions like the U.A.W., the I.A.M., the Service Employees International Union, the International Union of Electrical Workers and the Communications Workers of America, the coalitions have engaged in lobbying, developed "hit lists" of conservative incumbents and backed candidates who are not tied to corporate interests. In 1982, for example, IPAC members campaigned door-to-door in nearly every Illinois community with more than 5,000 people. They visited some 50,000 households and helped elect a progressive candidate, Lane Evans, to Congress.

In California, the C.E.D., founded after Tom Hayden's surprisingly effective campaign in the 1976 Democratic senatorial primary, has become a leftist caucus within the state Democratic Party. It has helped elect candidates, hammered out a platform that emphasizes housing and energy issues, and drawn unions, minority organizations, tenants' committees and women's groups under its broad banner.

In New Jersey, PIPAC, founded in 1981, has brought a number of statewide single-issue groups into an umbrella organization. Spearheading efforts to form the committee was the eleven-year-old New Jersey Tenants Organization, which has more than 80,000 dues-paying members and which has won rent control in more than 100 cities and helped push through the toughest landlord-tenant statutes in the nation. N.J.T.O. endorsed many members of the State Legislature, who in return supported the group's legislative agenda. But it eventually recognized the limitations of single-issue politics and turned to coalition building, bringing together representatives of the Environmental Voters Alliance, NOW, the auto workers', communications workers' and machinists' unions, the Hispanic Political Action Committee, senior citizens' groups and SANE. The groups discovered that many of their friends and enemies in the Legislature frequently overlapped, so they decided to work together to elect (or defeat) candidates. Because of its late start and lack of money, PIPAC had only limited success in the November 1981 elections. But the coalition held together, and it is now preparing for this year's state Democratic primaries.

The Rhode Island Community Labor Coalition (CLOC), formed in 1979, consists of fourteen labor unions, six community organizations and individual members. CLOC initially worked on two legislative issues—a plant closing bill and a tax on oil companies. But its leaders felt that if the coalition were to be effective, it had to be able to threaten defeat for those legislators who opposed its efforts. CLOC successfully ran a candidate for state legislator in last year's Democratic primary; he later won the general election. It plans to run four or five candidates next year.

The first steps toward party-within-a-party coalitions are now being taken in other states as well, such as Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Minnesota and Virginia. Progressive groups are working together within the Democratic Party while continuing to pursue their own goals outside it. The next step is the formation of a party within a party at the national level, which would coordinate tactics and enter candidates in local, state and Congressional Democratic primaries—and perhaps in the 1992 Presidential primaries.

To be sure, many leftists have serious reservations about working within the Democratic Party, pointing out that it includes some of the worst racists, sexists and corporate fat cats in American politics. But by the same token, it also includes some of the most progressive figures: Representatives John Conyers, Ron Dellums, Byron Dorgan, Pat Schroeder, Barbara Mikulski, George Crockett, Bruce Morrison, Barney Frank and Marcy Kaptur; Mayors Bruce Van Allen of Santa Cruz and Harold Washington of Chicago; Texas Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower; City Council members Ruth Messinger of New York, Ray Flynn of Boston, David Cohen of Philadelphia and David Sullivan of Cambridge, Massachusetts; Essex County, New Jersey, Executive Peter Shapiro; and state legislators Julian Bond of

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Georgia, Harlan Baker of Maine, Tom Hayden of California and Tom Gallagher of Massachusetts. Most of the prominent activist politicians on the left today—those who can be found at meetings of the Conference on Alternative State and Local Policy, for example—are Democrats.

Moreover, the growing number of primaries, the notable success of recent voter registration drives and the decline of political bosses have opened up the party and decentralized power within it. The Democratic Party is in a transition period, and an organized progressive strategy could move it to the left and turn primaries and caucuses into genuine political contests.

Since the mid-1970s, the uneasy alliance between "corporate liberals" and organized labor, which exerts a strong influence on the Democratic Party's policies, has been severely tested. Corporate interests are not willing to make the concessions to the poor and the working class that they made during the era of economic expansion following World War II. Now they want give-backs and take-aways. All the current Democratic Presidential candidates now espouse some version of neoliberalism, with its call for cooperation between business and labor. But neoliberalism offers little to the electorate outside of the upper-middle class. It is also less sensitive to the concerns of feminists and environmentalists than is more traditional liberalism.

The alternative is a program of economic democracy that would close tax loopholes for the rich; dramatically reduce defense spending; direct public funds toward a national health care system, mass transit and nonprofit housing; give employees and consumers a greater voice in corporate decision making; and put America on the road to full employment. With an effective national organization, progressives running for office on such a platform would be able to mobilize the millions of alienated citizens who don't bother to vote because they can find no candidate or party that represents their interests.

Voter registration is a crucial part of any progressive strategy, and it is here that the grass-roots organizations in a party-within-a-party coalition would play a particularly important role. In the 1980 election, 76.5 million people out of the 163 million who were eligible to vote—47 percent—stayed home. They were mostly blue-collar workers, members of minority groups and the poor—those who have suffered most from the policy failures and broken promises of politicians in both parties. But experience shows that when candidates offer workable solutions to pressing problems, voters turn out in large numbers. The New Deal brought millions of people into the political process with the promise of Social Security, public-service jobs, subsidized housing and rural electrification. Harold Washington's mayoral victory in Chicago proved the effectiveness of large-scale voter registration drives among the powerless.

To make the party-within-a-party strategy work, the various state coalitions and national groups must form an umbrella organization that will plan how best to use their collective resources. Its activities might include:

(1) Creating a think tank to generate ideas and policy proposals. Such a body could draw on work that is already being done by the Institute for Policy Studies, The Democracy Project, the Democratic Socialists of America, the Conference on Alternative State and Local Policy and similar groups.

(2) Designating a shadow cabinet composed of individuals from the progressive left who could fill positions in government related to their areas of expertise. Prominent figures like Barry Commoner (energy), Frances Moore Lappé (agriculture), Ralph Nader (commerce), Richard Barnet (defense), Ron Dellums (health and human services), Elizabeth Holtzman (attorney general) and William Winpisinger (labor) could provide critiques and proposals on a wide range of issues.

(3) Establishing a communications network, drawing on publications like *The Nation*, *In These Times*, *Mother Jones*, *the Progressive*, *Dissent*, *Social Policy*, *democracy* and *Socialist Review*. These magazines could publish discussions of ideas, strategies, values and goals. The national coalition might also start a syndicated column, a news service and a cable network in order to reach a wider public.

(4) Compiling a score card to rate elected officials' voting records and public statements. Many progressive groups already produce such ratings, which are often published by the mainstream press. While individual groups should continue to rate politicians according to their own litmus tests, the coalition could compile a comprehensive score card on all the issues that are important to the democratic left.

(5) Hiring a field staff of organizers, who would recruit candidates capable of strong leadership, help groups and candidates on the national coalition's priority list, teach campaign techniques and coordinate voter registration drives.

The growing number of successful coalitions at the state level will provide the building blocks for a national strategy. But it will be necessary for some sectors of organized labor to oppose the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s current direction, including its attachment to a cold war foreign policy, its acquiescence to a tighten-your-belts austerity mentality and its unwillingness to organize the unorganized. Fortunately, more and more union mavericks—leaders and rank and file alike—are working to shake up old-style business unionism. A revitalized labor movement would push most of the Democratic Party's business support into the Republican camp, and open the field for greater numbers of progressive Democratic candidates.

One thing *is* certain. The progressive left must step up its political and organizational attack. Otherwise, the living standards of those who are employed will continue to decline, and the plight of the unemployed will continue to worsen. Even if the Democrats win with a Carter clone in 1984, their policies will lead voters to swing back to the Republicans four years later. The left must offer a real alternative, one which will shift the basic priorities of national politics. The party-within-a-party strategy offers the best hope not only for defeating Reagan next year but also for moving the nation to the left. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Henry's Nemesis

ALAN WOLFE

THE PRICE OF POWER: Kissinger in the Nixon White House. *Seymour M. Hersh. Summit. 698 pp. $19.95.*

H. R. Haldeman was sitting in his office one September day in 1970 when Henry Kissinger burst through the door. Exclaiming, "this could mean war, Bob," the national security adviser dropped highly classified photographs onto Haldeman's desk, revealing that the Cubans were making a concerted effort to build up their—soccer fields. Why war? asked a stunned Haldeman. Because, Kissinger replied heatedly, "Cubans play *baseball.* Russians play *soccer.*"

That characteristic piece of Nixoniana has been told many times, and Kissinger has occasionally been criticized for his melodrama and hysteria. Yet I can think of no journalist in the United States except Seymour Hersh capable of providing the following gloss: "Kissinger could not have been more wrong. The first Cuban soccer association was founded in 1924, and by the 1930s, Sunday afternoon soccer was so popular on the island that winter-league baseball games had to be rescheduled for morning. In 1938, a Cuban team reached the final eight of the World Cup international soccer competition in France. The sport declined in popularity in the 1950s, according to *Sports Illustrated* magazine, but revived after Castro's takeover in 1959. Cuba began fielding teams in the World Cup competition again, and by the late 1970s had seventy organized teams."

One could hardly ask for more thoroughness. *The Price of Power* is a bloodhound tracking Kissinger, sniffing his every statement, following his every move, and at pauses in the action, waiting, just waiting, for him to take the next step. It will long serve as the official record of the major foreign policy atrocities of the Nixon years. It's all here: the plotting against Allende, the bombing of Cambodia, the linkage of SALT I to wheat sales, the worse-than-it-seemed-at-the-time prolongation of the Vietnam War for petty reasons of personal vanity. Hersh's thesis—that the criminal mentality that gave us Watergate carried over into foreign affairs—is established beyond a doubt. The footnotes—a book-length product in their own right—are even more compelling than the text. Here appears the history of Cuban soccer. So do all the juicy details about who betrayed whom; the servile quotations from court journalists like Henry Brandon, the brothers Kalb and James Reston; and the side-by-side contrasts of Nixon's and Kissinger's memoirs, with each other and with reality. They are a tour de force, these footnotes, some of the best documentation on the domestic roots of U.S. foreign policy I have ever read.

Hersh, as anyone who has followed the controversy around this book knows, detests Kissinger with a venom that is Shakespearean in its intensity. I share his wrath. It is not only that Kissinger has blood on his hands. It is not only that he has never been called to account for his lies and deceit. It is that he has been lionized for his crimes. I once told myself that before the United States could ever again be morally whole, it would have to convict Henry Kissinger of war crimes. Since he continues to bask in glory, reading Hersh's book is the most cathartic experience left for us Kissinger-haters. Henry deserves a lot worse than this book, but this book is likely to be the worst he will get.

Hersh's relentlessness, though, ultimately weakens his prosecutorial style, if not his case. Like a college debater, he is determined to take the opposite position no matter how ridiculous. For example, after some hesitation Kissinger supported West German Chancellor Willy Brandt's efforts at *Ostpolitik* in 1971. In that year the superpowers, at Brandt's insistence, finally resolved the status of Berlin, a major victory for the peace and security of Europe. For reasons only a specialist in international law could hope to understand, the State Department—not a place for heroes merely because Kissinger hated it—insisted that the United States never mention the word "Berlin" in the final communiqué, jeopardizing the whole effort at East-West cooperation. To their credit, Nixon and Kissinger cut through the nonsense and let the name stand in a decision viewed by the State Department as a concession to the Soviet Union. Hersh takes the State Department's side in this contretemps, and it's a silly side to take. You have to hate Kissinger an awful lot to sympathize with the right-wing critique of SALT I or to adopt the China Lobby position on recognition of Peking. Hersh does, and there is no reason for it, political or literary. An evil man who did no good would be unworthy of the epic treatment Hersh gives Kissinger.

I was going to come down much harder on Hersh for his monomaniacal criticism of Kissinger's every move. But then I read James Fallows on Kenneth Adelman in the July issue of *The Atlantic* and was reminded why Hersh is so necessary. Adelman, you may recall, was nominated by Ronald Reagan to head the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, even though he is a brash, flippant, unqualified, immature and contemptuous man who has made a career of writing against the principle of arms control. Fallows, on the other hand, is widely regarded as a liberal, albeit of the neo sort, and is one of the better Washington writers we have. The stage seemed set for an interesting confrontation.

The article Fallows wrote is the best single argument for Seymour Hersh that one can imagine. Fallows is quite sympathetic to Adelman. He takes his word on some highly controversial stuff—such as whether Adelman was party to a hit-list memorandum sent to him by Gen. Edward Rowny of the Geneva arms reduction talks—instead of actually finding out. He writes the opinions of both sides without engaging himself, yet leaves the reader with the distinct impression that those in power have the better case. In short, he does for Adelman what Reston and Brandon did for Kissinger: he fawns over power; sides with reaction to compensate for his own liberalism; blames the opposition to Adelman for politicizing the whole affair; and loses sight of the fact that as a result of this dreadful appointment, real harm may indeed be done. If Adelman, a minor-league Kissinger, gets such respect from Fallows, a major-league correspondent, then the whole system still reeks as badly as it did when Hersh began to track Kissinger.

Hersh's obsessiveness, then, may be a necessary corrective to the inanity of

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what passes for political journalism in America. Hersh towers above his colleagues for some very old-fashioned reasons. He believes there is an objective truth that is independent of, and generally contrary to, the perceptions of high officials. He is determined to learn what that truth is, often traveling to distant places like Vietnam (the northern part) to find out. He does not care about access to politicians and seeks no popularity. Uninterested in being anyone's speechwriter, he does not use his words to position himself in the game of musical chairs that policy making in Washington has become. He is the best of the Washington journalists, and no one seems interested in challenging him for that spot. Yet something still bothers me. Hersh may be the best Washington journalist, but he is still a Washington journalist. Consequently, he is unable to place the story of Kissinger and Nixon into the larger picture of what has been taking place in America since it decided to try to rule the world.

Henry Kissinger is everything that Hersh says he is, but that should merely start the analysis, not conclude it. The problem is not why this particular man is venal, but how he came to prosper. While in graduate school at Harvard, Kissinger was in intense competition with classmates Zbigniew Brzezinski, Samuel P. Huntington and Stanley Hoffman over who would go the farthest. Why did Kissinger win? It cannot be because he is the most ambitious: Brzezinski can match him on that score. Nor is it because he is the most reactionary: on cold war issues, Huntington is farther to the right. Nor, finally, is it because Kissinger is the smartest: Hoffman not only has a more analytical mind; he is also a genuine intellectual. Kissinger succeeded more than the others because only he recognized how far America had traveled down the road to empire and, as a result, how only the most ruthless and completely cynical *Realpolitik* would suffice to govern it.

Since 1945, the United States has been at war with its own conception of government. Created as an eighteenth-century republic in a distant corner of the world, America has become a twentieth-century superpower poking its nose into the affairs of dozens of countries. For about twenty years after the creation of a Pax Americana in the late 1940s, the benefits of empire were bountiful and, to different degrees, most Americans shared in them. Yet toward the end of the 1960s—in fact, just about the time Nixon and Kissinger came to power—the costs of empire were beginning to exceed the rewards. Those costs were both economic and political. Once, the United States could intervene in other countries, as it did by helping Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei in Chile in the 1960s, yet still preserve its belief that it was supporting democracy; under Kissinger and Nixon, intervention in Chile cost America a big chunk of its democratic self-image. Similarly, in the 1950s and 1960s, international trade worked to the advantage of American consumers; by the 1970s, the opposite was true. In order to sell wheat to the Soviet Union for geostrategic purposes, for example, the price of bread for every American had to rise substantially.

Facing a conflict between overseas realities and domestic self-perceptions, Kissinger and Nixon invented the perfect strategy for the times: they would keep their policies secret, so secret that neither the Secretary of State nor the Secretary of Defense would know about them. But where could they find a model for the kind of state they envisioned, an empire able to go about its business without nasty interference from interest groups, the press and prickly politicians? The answer is contained in *The Price of Power*, although Hersh does not explicitly state it. For Kissinger, and therefore for Nixon, the Soviet Union had to be understood not as the enemy against which American foreign policy should be directed but as the prototype for how it should be made.

Hersh gives example after example of what can only be called the Kremlinization of American foreign policy: It was reported during the SALT I talks that Soviet delegates asked American intelligence specialists for details on their own weapons, so secretive had Moscow become. Yet Hersh reports that the U.S. delegate to the SALT talks, Gerald Smith, learned of the details of America's negotiating position from his Soviet counterpart. On another occasion, Nixon sent a top secret cable to Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker in Saigon in order to publicize a supposed halt to the bombing of Cambodia. (Top secret cables in Washington are read by armies of people.) He then had Kissinger tell Gen. Creighton Abrams to ignore all top secret cables and continue the bombing. In the case of Chile, the Administration developed a covert operation called Track I, and then devised an even more covert scenario, secrets within secrets, to carry out its program.

Kissinger's Washington was a place of extreme tension and nail-biting paranoia. While Nixon and Kissinger were tapping phones, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was stealing documents from Kissinger's office. The closer one came to the inner circle, the more hidden events became, to the point where two men—one of them constantly drunk—were making decisions about fateful matters without consulting anyone who might give them perspective. Gerald Smith remembers seeing Kissinger board Air Force One with Anatoly Dobrynin, trusting him more than he trusted his own staff. Smith should not have been surprised. Nixon and Kissinger liked dealing directly with the Russians, for the Russians understood best how to be a superpower without tolerating domestic interference.

Hersh brilliantly describes the decrepitude of the American republic, but description is no substitute for explanation. Still, every Kissinger deserves a Hersh. Whatever faults I find with this book are more than balanced by the image I have of Kissinger gnashing his teeth as he reads it and realizes that while he might have charmed everyone else, there was one man he could never reach. □

THE EXECUTION

It finally had to happen.
On a day with a wind
Blowing down from the mountains,
Fluttering the leaves, whipping
The flags at the corners
Of the city square, jammed full
Of jeering citizens, enraged
And made lustful by our crimes.

You stood beside me: fearless,
Disdainful and proud.
(Marie Antoinette with brains
And without that Habsburg pout)
We could not touch but our eyes
Met and said, 'It was worth it all,
'We would do it again!' At once

A hundred drums rattled,
The crowd surged forward
And sang its ode to joy,
Its black crescendo of hate.
The great blade fell, spilling
Open memory's frail jar:
Blood to redeem our history:
The felonies of love.

Harvey Gross

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An Esthete in Spite of Herself

BARBARA KOENIG QUART

ART & ARDOR: Essays. By Cynthia Ozick. *Alfred A. Knopf. 305 pp. $16.95.*

Even if *Art and Ardor* were less alive, less zesty with ideas, less richly written than it is, I'd still find it a book of singular interest. All of us who went from the back of our struggling immigrant parents' Bronx store to Henry James and Virginia Woolf—how can we not give a special cheer for a champion sensibility produced along that same road? Who should be the Ideal Reader of this book, I ask myself, if not me? And though Ozick would not thank me for saying so, the fact that the feisty and often sonorous voice is the daughter's this time, not the son's, makes me the more eager to hear it. True, even we Ideal Readers are unlikely to have ties to Judaism anywhere near as close as hers. More power to you, I say with one part of my mind, while with another part I keep asking her, How can you possibly say that, or this, or this? And with yet another, How clever—how skillfully put.

Because even if one wants to argue with Ozick every step of the way—and I only want to argue with her every third step—one must start by noting how very well she writes. These twenty-three essays, on subjects ranging from Edith Wharton to John Updike to Gershom Scholem, with stops in between for mulling over what art should be doing and what Jewishness is, are a pleasure to read for their vividness of thought and language. Take this image of Truman Capote: "looking like an old caricature of Aeolus, the puff-cheeked little god of wind . . . his tongue on his lip like a soft fly."

Ozick is a writer of passionately held beliefs and values asserted with great confidence and verve, a fierce moralist who often sees herself as the solitary caretaker of truths everyone else is too wrongheaded to understand. Her opposition to contemporary feminism is a case in point. For Ozick, the women's movement has given itself over to "separatism," when it should be tearing down the whole idea of gender difference. In view of the fertility and vitality of contemporary feminism, the rich body of scholarship from women's studies and the generally liberating effect of acknowledging that women indeed have a different—and enormously valuable and interesting—experience, it seems almost perverse for her to argue that separate necessarily means inferior, means the old lists of derogatory stereotypes of women's natures and disparagements by male critics of "lady writers." Ozick argues that in a world of "women writers" (as opposed to writers), "individuality of condition and temperament do not apply"—as if all feminism were a crude Judy Chicago tableau with V. Woolf and E. Dickinson all porcelain genitalia together—but surely she is too intelligent to call the worst case the whole. Her stance is particularly odd in view of her enormous concern for Jewish identity, and her scorn for "universalists" (mainly Jews who insist they are just like everyone else). How can she, of all people, insist that women and men are all just human beings?

In view of all this, one isn't surprised that when Ozick writes about Edith Wharton and Virginia Woolf, she refuses any degree of sympathetic identification. Ozick announces herself intent to find behind the handsome, formally posed public image of Wharton, the woman who wrote every morning in bed. She ends up seeing only drift in a life busy with grand house-building, bold travels, literary salons and many intellectual friendships, not to mention a steady stream of novels and stories. If too much freedom is a sin, the equally childless and even more duty-free Henry James should be open to similar criticism, but either his maleness or his genius (or Ozick's love of his books) exempts him.

If Wharton gets it for "drifting," Ozick finds Woolf's tenacity of purpose—writing away through air raids and illnesses—equally disturbing, proof that for Woolf nothing and nobody were real unless written down. But what really fascinates Ozick—as the essay title, "Mrs. Virginia Woolf: A Madwoman and Her Nurse," reveals—is not the woman writer but the Jewish husband, with his yeshiva student's face and the "seriousness that makes him the most responsible and conscien-

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tious figure among all the Bloomsburyites." That conscientiousness also makes him the most attractive figure to Ozick, though someone else might well find it a drab virtue amidst all the flamboyant plumage of Bloomsbury. Ozick is big on "seriousness," especially "moral seriousness," her all-purpose touchstone throughout the book. She can also be brilliant when looking at the world, especially the Jewish world, sociologically (though it's a perspective she keeps debunking), as when she proposes that assuming the heavy burden of Virginia was the price Leonard paid for becoming part of the illustrious intellectual milieu she was born into, and that only because of her madness did he have the "serious" permanent marriage with her he needed. Ozick implies that had Virginia been sane, she would have lived like her sister Vanessa, as if that were a promiscuous and frivolous life because it was not conventional.

Here, and frequently elsewhere, one feels that buried under the literary sophistication, high intelligence and stylish prose are the values of one's Brooklyn aunt (and I don't mean Park Slope)—the kinds of parental injunctions that Philip Roth's heroes do intense though ambivalent battle against. Ozick, with no ambivalence (but often not quite overtly), promotes those values—prime among them the centrality of blood ties, marital loyalty no matter what and childbearing. They often intrude on literary discussions, as when she finds E.M. Forster's gentle humanism discredited by his childless, homosexual life (she says it in a qualified and complex way but that's what she means). The Wharton essay, ostensibly written to bring her belated justice, instead reproaches her—for finally terminating her miserable twenty-eight-year marriage (Ozick's sympathy is all with husband Teddy); for caring more about the deaths of two longtime servants than about the illness of a brother; for having been attached to dogs rather than children. But what does Wharton's love of dogs have to do with *The Age of Innocence* or *The House of Mirth*?

Such moralizing is the lower level of Ozick's larger insistence that art must be morally engaged—which for her is a Jewish quality. She notes that while the New Critics were sealing literature off from history and biography, Jewish critics like Trilling, Rahv, Howe and Kazin "put humanity back in." She finds it significant that Bellow, Malamud and Roth continue to write fairly traditional novels about recognizable worlds, although she also finds those worlds *too* real and scorns them—excepting Bellow's—as gross sociology. With such doctrinaire and restrictive notions about fiction, no wonder she sees herself sitting alone on a "wastepile of discarded artists." And yet, she is indeed different: she holds her Judaism in an ideological embrace that has no equivalent among male Jewish American writers. (It's not for nothing that, like their heroes, they generally prefer Christian bedfellows.) Rejecting Updike's portrait of a Jew in the two Bech books, Ozick wittily treats this "indifferent disaffected de-Judaized Jewish novelist" as a stand-in for the various real-life ones, and invents a Torah-reading Bech of her own, who has a religious experience amidst the hills of Jerusalem. Luckily there's no way she can make Roth's Portnoy, Kepesh and Zuckerman, or Malamud's Bober and Dubin (not to mention Mailer's Sergius O'Shaughnessy) do likewise.

Ultimately, Ozick's intense morality rests on religion. The words that recur through the essays, invested with suggestive meaning, are "Covenant," "liturgy," "idols" and "redemption." Although she writes that "as a Jew I am an autodidact," and that "print is all my Judaism," she still upholds Jewishness like a female Moses, giving out commandments straight from God: Rashi and Yehudah Halevi will live on, but Norman Mailer will not. "When a Jew is a secular person, he is no longer a Jew," she declares, unblinkingly disqualifying the vast majority of Jews. Yet because she takes that stance jokingly, obliquely, stylishly, its full severity is rarely apparent.

She is unfailingly eloquent on the subject of non-American Jewish writers, for whom she feels a generosity she rarely extends to other writers. No one has written richer praise of I.B. Singer, "a transcendent inventor, not a curator," despite the grief in his work for a world destroyed. She is fascinated by Gershom Scholem, great friend of Walter Benjamin, who found his way to the tradition of mysticism within Judaism despite a German Jewish father who only wanted his sons to be invisible. She is stunning on "the running flame of amazing imagery" in Bruno Schulz's writing, and on the poignance of Gertrude Kolmar, a poet singing from the "open cage of her spirit" as her "external precincts narrowed and narrowed toward death" in Auschwitz. Ozick has a "dream of reversal"—of running the reel of history, that tragic cinema, backward—so all those mounds of ash could be "lifted up . . .healed . . . given again to greening life." As memorializer, and through her prodigious grieving rage over all those murders, she herself does indeed seek to perform that task.

Finally, after one has argued with one position, admired another and differed with but respected a third, the fact is that summaries suggest a narrower and cruder response than one has when reading the book. Ozick talks a lot about idols, by which she means esthetics (or any other delight of the world) taken as an end in itself. Perhaps she warns against idols so much because she herself is an idolmaker, an anomalous mixture of the esthete and the moralist, obviously in love with style and form, with art. And a good thing too. The polemic edge keeps yielding to the elegance of prose, to the intensity of its engagement with art, with writers and with Jewishness—to an ardor (just the right word) for ideas and books and two cultures. The two concluding essays—one about Ozick's reverence for Henry James, which "cost me my youth," the other a childhood memoir that takes us to her parents' pharmacy in the Bronx—close the volume on a luminous, personal note:

> And then one day you find yourself leaning here, writing at that selfsame

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round glass table salvaged from the Park View Pharmacy—writing this, an impossibility, a summary of how you came to be where you are now, and where, God knows, is that? Your hair is whitening, you are a well of tears, what you meant to do (beauty and justice) you have not done, papa and mama are under the earth, you live in panic and dread, the future shrinks and darkens, stories are only vapor, your inmost craving is for nothing but an old scarred pen, and what, God knows, is that? □

BOOK NOTES.

WEST WITH THE NIGHT. *By Beryl Markham. North Point Press. 294 pp. $12.50.* "To me she is alive and to me she speaks. I feel through the soles of my feet on the rudder-bar the willing strain and flex of her muscles. . . . The wind in the wires is like the tearing of soft silk under the blended drone of engine and propeller. Time and distance together slip smoothly past the tips of my wings without sound, without return . . . " Beryl Markham wrote like a pilot because she was one. When this memoir first appeared in 1942, her prose made Hemingway feel he was "simply a carpenter with words." Her sentences are made with the care and precision that go into landing a plane.

Markham sharpened her perceptiveness as a child, hunting barefoot with the Nandi Murani tribe in what was then British East Africa. At 17, when drought destroyed her father's farm, she rode north over the mountains to train racehorses. Later, as the first woman pilot in Africa, she made her dangerous living ferrying supplies and scouting for elephant by air—a white woman's way of testing her courage and coming of age as a hunter.

With the easy skill of someone who has filled long nights with stories, Markham recounts her adventures—discoveries, rescues and narrow escapes, the glint of an airplane abandoned in the desert, the look of a lion about to pounce. Her love of Africa inspires endless curiosity and avoids imperial illusion; she is as witty and astute about her Nandi Murani friends as she is about the eccentric Europeans who come to hunt for ivory and endure "discomfort in such lavish proportions that only the wealthy can afford it." Much more than a pilot's memoir, *West With the Night* is a wise, funny and inspiring exploration of a life well lived.

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THE INSURRECTION. *By Antonio Skarmeta. Translated by Paula Sharp. Ediciones del Norte. Distributed by Persea Books (225 Lafayette St., New York, N.Y. 10012). 247 pp. $7.50.* The Sandinist revolution in Nicaragua was made by ordinary people; *The Insurrection*, a novel told through letters and snatches of narrative as simple as folk tales, without melodrama or millenarian heroics, describes how it was carried out in the small town of Leon.

The fighting cuts across families and neighborhoods and touches all the corners of everyday life. Agustin is a young government soldier proud to be singled out by the suave Captain Flores as his personal bodyguard; his Sandinist father calls him a coward and begs the town's priest to persuade him to desert. Salinas, the postman, smitten with Agustin's sister, Vicky, swallows his jealousy and risks his life to deliver letters to her from her guerrilla-poet lover at the front.

Antonio Skarmeta has the Latin American knack of making realism glow like myth without losing its solid texture. Paula Sharp's dull and clumsy translation has obliterated the subtleties of his prose, but not the warmth and vividness of his characters. Passionate and unpretentious, *The Insurrection* is full of rare insights into the human side of revolution.

—Maria Margaronis

NAMING THE SHELLS

Sand dollars in shallow waves
tumble the light,
drop like small moons
in foam along the shore line.
We fill our pockets, knot
flapping shirttails into sacks.
Stiff as turtles or crabs,
we rasp as we step,
loose sand in the dollars
shifting with stars.

For years we watched commonplace
forecasts fulfill themselves,
a calm surface with scattered
offshore storms, an overcast sky,
a wind that died at dusk.
This pattern, measured daily
by high and low tides,
led us to accept a stingy
claw or clamshell spears
hidden in wet sand. We honed
our expectations to fragments
and ignored the salty spume
that links us like brothers
to the moon.

Now this show, this tumble,
this gift, begs a response.
Naming each shell
after a part of the body,
liver flank tibula,
we make it ours, *femur*
spleen eyelid blood.
Not being medical students,
we run out at heart,
and since we have stacks
left to name, we call them
one after another, *heart, heart, heart*, and hear in our voices
the pulse of the tide.

Judith Root

LINGO.

JIM QUINN

Webster's Ninth

INFER.

> Sir Thomas More is the first writer known to have used both *infer* and *imply* in the approved senses (1529). He is also the first to have used *infer* in a sense close in meaning to imply (about 1530). Both of these uses of *infer* coexisted without comment until some time around the end of World War I. Since then senses 3 and 4 [*indicate, suggest, hint*] of *infer* have been frequently condemned as an undesirable blurring of a useful distinction. Their use, esp. with a personal subject, will still incur the wrath of some in spite of the usage of four centuries and the fact that in a given instance the meaning will be clear from the context.

In a very short time, we will be reading dozens of heart-rending and heart-broken essays about the death of English, and civilization, and human thought, and a lot of other good stuff. The reason? Merriam-Webster has just published *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (1,563 pp.; cloth $14.95; leather look $15.95)—a book that is a model of scholarship, a delight to read and a genuine description of our language.

For the first time in any American dictionary, entries include the date a word first appeared in print. Enemies of new corruptions may find some of these dates surprising: *alright* (14th century, not objected to until the 19th century); *input* (1753); *inoperative* (1631); *finalize* (1922, in Australia); *stonewall* as a verb (1889).

Best of all, there are over a hundred usage notes, like the one on *infer* and *imply*, based not on polls of supposed experts but on historical data—a survey of actual practice, and of actual opinion about practice (often an entirely different thing). Ward Gilman, who wrote the brief essays, has a talent for conciseness and a light touch. He may have introduced into the dreary genre of language-advice just what it needed—a tone of scholarly insouciance.

Gilman notes that "when *among* is automatically chosen for more than two, some strain on English idiom can result," and illustrates that strain by quoting our leading anti-idiomatic writer: " 'A worthy book that nevertheless falls *among* many stools,' John Simon." William Safire is used to illustrate the use of *presently* to mean now, a use Safire has attacked in his language column.

The customary objections to ordinary English are dismissed briefly and thoroughly:

> § *Center around*, a standard idiom, is often objected to as illogical. Since it is an idiom, the criticism on grounds of logic is irrelevant . . .
> § Objections [to *more unique*] are based chiefly on the assumption that *unique* has but a single absolute sense, an assumption contradicted by information readily available in a dictionary . . .
> § Use of *blame* . . . with *on* has occas. been disparaged as wrong. Such disparagement is without basis; *blame on* occurs as frequently in carefully edited prose as *blame for*. Both forms are standard.
> § Some handbooks and textbooks recommend that *each other* be restricted to reference to two and *one another* to reference to three or more. The distinction, while neat, is not observed in actual usage. *Each other* and *one another* are used interchangeably by good writers, and have been since at least the 16th century . . .
> § From the reams of pronouncements written about the distinction between *shall* and *will*—dating back as far as the 17th century—it is clear that the rules laid down have never very accurately reflected actual usage . . .

Gilman's explanation of why *ain't* is standard—citing Winston Churchill, Cleveland Amory, popular songs and popular catch phrases—will make you laugh if you love language, and snarl if you love grammar-book rules.

I caveat a few minor points: The *New Collegiate* is very conservative on foreign plurals. Though it calls *the data is*

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standard, it warns that *the media is* is "not as well-established." And if you want a definition of *graffiti* you must look up the singular *graffito*, where you are told that "use of *graffiti* as a singular count noun . . . is not standard." If that were true, we would say, "Which graffito is more elegant, BONEHEAD or POET?" That is plainly impossible in English—at least to my ear. *Graffiti* is an English word; *graffito* an Italian one.

Webster's is justly proud of the thousands of new words—like *antinuke*, *house husband*, *floppy disk*, *humongous* (listed as slang), *up-scale* (hyphenated, for some reason), *gluon*, *videotex* and *viewdata*. But *caveat* as a verb (1661, later popularized by Alexander Haig) is missing. So is a politicians' word that is one of my favorites—*attrit*, reduce by attrition, as in "We have to attrit about five hundred cops."

Those are minor objections. Cheerful good sense and information are the best weapons against language superstition, and *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate* gives us plenty of both. The dating of words and the dating of first objections to standard idioms are lexicographic strokes of genius. With these kinds of weapons to fight with, hopefully, it is presently alright to print *different than* in the pages of a respectable left-wing magazine. That doesn't mean the fight against ignorant and small-minded prescriptions is over, of course. But it ain't bad. □

FILMS.

ROBERT HATCH

War Games
Trading Places
L'Etoile du Nord

John Badham's *War Games* is a suspense melodrama, excellent family amusement for a summer evening. The threat at its center is no fiction, however; it is nuclear world war. *War Games* is *The China Syndrome* of missile proliferation. Because they capitalize on legitimate anxieties, films of this sort raise expectations of social responsibility, and in its closing moments *War Games* makes a gesture in that direction, while staying within the limits of mass entertainment.

The danger it dramatizes is not that we or the Russians might deliberately start a nuclear war, but that one might

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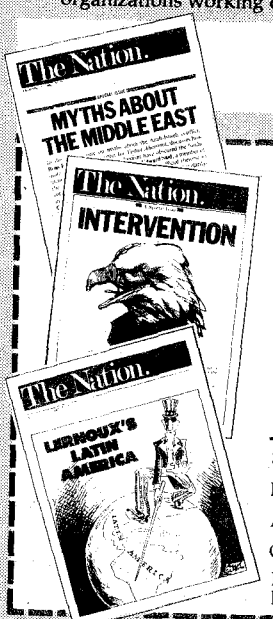
Warning that the peace movement must not be caught "sleepwalking," E.P. Thompson outlines the dangers of the Soviet "peace offensive," and urges the movement to eschew the seductions of both superpowers and to continue to "take the hand away from politicians and play it ourselves; by demonstrations, direct action, changing people's hearts and minds and by . . . breaking the barriers between East and West."

Disarmament: Covering the Unthinkable.
In this special issue Richard Pollak takes a critical look at the media coverage of the indisputably most important issue facing mankind; Michael Kazin gives a brief history of the birth of the freeze movement; and David Corn presents a useful directory of organizations working on the disarmament issue.



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be triggered by technical malfunction. The film supposes that a high-school youth whose bedroom is crammed with advanced computer hardware has unwittingly made contact with NORAD's master component and challenged it to a game called Thermonuclear War. The boy is playing for fun; the machine is playing for real. When the authorities twig to what is going on, they also find that their electronic golem is hellbent for blastoff and cannot be persuaded to stay its hand.

This disastrous impasse is so ingenious and absorbing that the Pentagon has felt the need to assure us that nothing of the sort is remotely possible with its equipment, a statement the military would be obliged to make, whatever the facts. Somewhat to my surprise, the Defense Department has not objected to the film's missile headquarters officer and civilian staff, all of whom run about shouting curses as soon as an alert is flashed on the monitors. This hair-trigger panic makes for passages of black comedy reminiscent of *Dr. Strangelove*.

The film touches on other real-life nightmares. There is a deranged professor (John Wood) who, having pondered the fate of the dinosaurs, thinks it high time for the human race to make way for a higher species. There is also the spooky notion, first expressed on the screen by *2001*, that we have developed artificial intelligences to the point where they are about to exhibit wills and passions of their own.

All in all, *War Games* offers cause for alarm, but it does so in a disconcertingly cheerful way. The hero (Matthew Broderick) is a smart and pleasant, if somewhat reckless, young man, much beloved by his loyal and courageous sweetheart (Ally Sheedy). We forgive him for tapping into his school's computer to improve his recorded grades because, at the last possible moment, his quick wits save us from doomsday. The audience leaves the theater grinning and chattering: it has seen its worst fear loom up like a mushroom cloud and has been shown how a bright kid can avert the catastrophe. Mass entertainments that deal in present dangers must, if they hope to pay for themselves, allay the fears on which they play.

Trading Places, directed by John Landis, who gave us *National Lampoon's Animal House* and *The Blues Brothers*, is summer entertainment that beats a social dictum with a slapstick. It advances the proposition that money makes the man, and finds it to be both true and thoroughly delightful.

The movie is as cynically contrived, if hardly as witty, as a Restoration comedy. Louis Winthorpe 3d is a wealthy young broker with an English butler, a limousine, a debutante fiancée and an air of priggish superiority. Billy Ray Valentine is a black panhandler who masquerades as a blind and legless Vietnam veteran. On a mischievous whim, and to settle a longstanding argument as to the influence of heredity versus environment, the wickedly rich and powerful Duke brothers switch the positions of these young men, stripping Winthorpe of position, possessions and the friendship of all society save one warmhearted whore, and placing Valentine in Winthorpe's golden surroundings. Before you can say "Come off it," Winthorpe is drinking to excess and plotting crimes against persons and property, while Valentine is making masterful coups in pork bellies and frozen orange juice on the commodities exchange. When the objects of this experiment discover what has been done to them, they join forces. Bedlam ensues, the wicked are punished and the heroes depart, with their wealth and their women, to a travel-brochure Caribbean island.

All that is potentially funny, and it would be funnier yet if Dan Aykroyd, who plays the pompous Winthorpe, and Ralph Bellamy and Don Ameche, who are the detestable Dukes, had resisted the temptation to ham their parts. Slapstick should be played straight. The movie is saved by Eddie Murphy, who turned the same trick not long ago for the otherwise so-so *48 Hours*. Here he uses Valentine's rise to riches to spin a running comment on the mores of privilege and prejudices, never losing his cool amusement at the follies in which he is involved. Murphy is an actor of irresistible grace, agility and wit.

Pierre Granier-Deferre's *L'Etoile du Nord* takes its name from an overnight Brussels-to-Paris train. It might more cogently have been called *Plat du Jour*, since it is a dish over which Francophiles on holiday will smack their lips. Made of the finest ingredients—script from a novel by Georges Simenon; Simone Signoret and Philippe Noiret as co-stars—it is every bit as satisfying as those names would lead one to expect.

Although it contains a murder,

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L'Etoile du Nord is not an Inspector Maigret mystery, but one of Simenon's excursions into human relationships. Edouard (Noiret) had been aboard the train on which a man was killed. Early next morning he finds himself back in Brussels; there is blood on his coat, his pockets are stuffed with bank notes and he is unable to remember the events of the night. Since he and the dead man had once been shipmates on a voyage from Egypt, during which Edouard had had an affair with the latter's mistress, Sylvie, the police will soon be looking for him. Or so it seems to Sylvie (Fanny Cottencon), who bundles him off to the comparative safety of a pension run by her mother, Madame Baron (Signoret). It is then that the main story begins.

In recent years, Signoret and Noiret have developed screen personalities that here complement each other in a most gratifying way. She is typically cast as a competent, eminently sensible woman whose heart leads her into situations that hardly accord with her settled ways. He plays men whose air of appealing incompetence conceals a complex and brooding intelligence. Both actors tend to establish an area of ambiguity in their roles, as though protecting the privacy of the people they portray. They are alike, too, in physique and manner. They have solid bodies; they move slowly but with compelling authority; their faces are large, their features composed but wonderfully expressive. Watching them in this film is like returning to old, dear friends.

Clad in a many-colored caftan, Edouard soon becomes the star of Madame Baron's dinner table. He regales the company with glamorous memories of Egypt, where, so he says, he was the respectful companion of Cairo's reigning chanteuse. His presence rouses conflicting responses from the other diners, but Madame, unaware of her guest's plight, finds herself drawn to this strange, calflike man of exotic background—a feeling which in no way compromises her loyalty to her dutiful husband. At the end, Madame Baron, in her decent coat and practical hat, stands at the quay, waving farewell as Edouard's convict squad embarks for a penal island.

There are no surprises in *L'Etoile du Nord*, but it sticks in one's mind because of the questions it only partially answers, and even more because Signoret and Noiret so eloquently evoke the sensibilities of French bourgeois life. □

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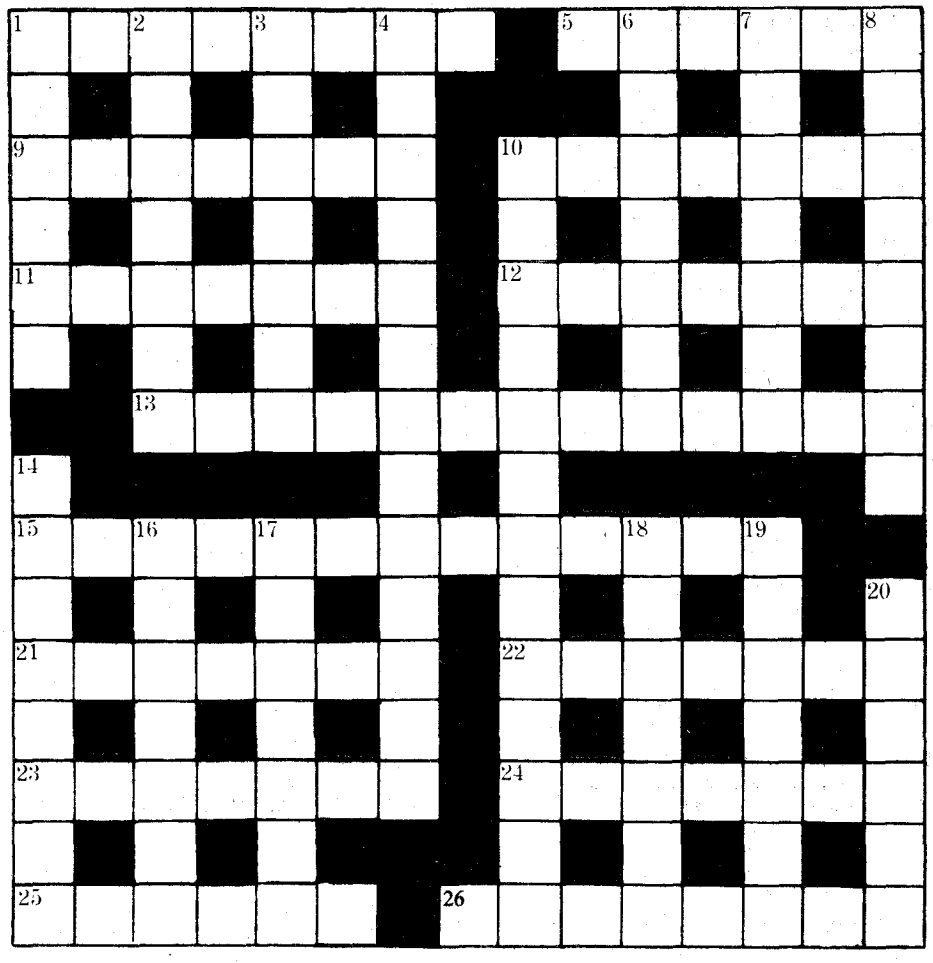
O	■	I	■	N	■	S	■	S	■	R	■	A	■	A
M	A	G	P	I	E	S	■	P	R	I	S	I	N	G
B	■	H	■	N	■	I	■	A	■	C	■	L	■	I
I	C	T	U	S	■	G	Y	R	F	A	L	C	O	N
N	■	■	■	U	■	N	■	E	■	■	■	O	■	G
E	N	T	E	R	■	S	I	D	E	R	E	A	L	■
D	■	R	■	E	■	■	■	■	■	E	■	T	■	P
■	M	I	L	D	E	W	E	D	■	C	I	S	C	O
I	■	G	■	■	■	H	■	R	■	R	■	■	■	L
N	I	G	H	T	T	I	M	E	■	O	F	W	A	Y
C	■	E	■	H	■	S	■	A	■	S	■	O	■	G
O	A	R	L	O	C	K	■	M	I	S	T	R	A	L
M	■	E	■	R	■	S	■	E	■	E	■	S	■	O
E	N	D	I	N	G	■	G	R	A	D	I	E	N	T

Crossword Puzzle No. 1971

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Drags around his broken but useful kitchen helpers. (8)
5 Blood possibly associated with such a ship. (6)
9 She was a gifted woman, but her opening day was unfortunate. (7)
10 Rivers and Masters output, possibly. (7)
11 Certainly not found at the bottom of the trunk, but an odd place to look for a rock! (7)
12 The ugly mood created by the capital of Washington being in sick, sick environment? (3,4)
13 Damage marks the weapons and sailors' implements. (13)
15 Placing what Southerners are supposed to relish as part of the course to be at least associated with the course. (7, 6)
21 Would one perhaps stumble upon a British excursionist? (7)
22 Going all to pieces as a drum takes part in the raid? (7)
23 It comes from certain islands, going in first and last with a sulfurous beginning. (7)
24 Not the whole story of what some tennis pros argue over. (7)
25 Said to be pig-pen ruled. (6)
26 Unusual sects and accompanying figures. (8)

DOWN

1 Stations where you might get posted? (6)
2 In addition, a variety of bean can be seen only in daylight. (7)
3 Does one catch the rest of the perch? (7)
4 Wrestling club? (The hold might be due to a fluke.) (9,4)
6 If you can make your own, it might be an atavism useful in cold weather. (7)
7 The rock of 5 might make you. (7)
8 Don't tilt so much! (No inclination at all, this way!) (8)
10 Does it take the best modern oil to make it slip? (5,8)
14 Sort of puts songs on it, for a top-flight kind of maid. (8)
16 Thirty's not exactly dry! (7)
17 Up! Up! It's miles around it, perhaps, but you might buy something on it. (7)
18 Informer, perhaps, in the Red—not very dependable! (7)
19 A lizard might come out as I run a different way. (7)
20 They might be expected to put you in your place. (6)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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